1:Sanders Z-5 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1
Peloponnesos

will buy to put on his lead ram. Then he will pick another deep bell for his eldest ewe, but will always test it against the deepest bell for what seems to be harmony to his ear. As he buys the smaller bells with the higher sounds, he always compares each with the deepest bell. In a flock of about 200, he may have as many as 60 to 70 carefully tested bells. The sound of a flock grazing or in movement is always pleasing even to the casual passerby. But to the shepherd it is the sweetest music of all, for it is as though his own private orchestra were playing for him, telling him by each little sound much about the behavior of his flock. If one note is missing for very long, he becomes aware of it and investigates to see what is wrong. When all are ringing together, he feels his little universe is safe.

As I walked through the village, I tried to picture it in the cold and empty winter. Obviously, the people from Valtetsi scatter out quite widely once they get below. What kind of community can they maintain with such a migration pattern? The shepherd's answers to queries about organizational life gave a rough sketch of the Valtetsi community.

Like other villages, they have the village council. The president of the council, who happens to run a coffeehouse, must stay in the village throughout the year. He can, on occasion, get a two-week leave from the prefect in Tripolis.

"Suppose he owned livestock," I asked, "and had to take them to winter pastures below. What would he do?"

"Other members of his family would have to take care of the animals for him and he would remain here."

Local elections are postponed from winter until the return of most of the people in the spring. But for national elections the men leave the flocks with their womenfolk and older children and walk all the way back up to the village to cast their ballots.

Valtetsi also has its school board, church board, and a livestock cooperative that helps its members get some credit from the Agricultural Bank, with their flocks as collateral (it serves no marketing function). Yet the migration pattern affects even these organizations, for at the time of my visit the cooperative president had not yet returned from his winter's sojourn on the plain nor had all of the board members for the church or the school.

In spite of the periodic absence of its inhabitants, the loyalty to Valtetsi is strong. Not the least of village distinctions was the Battle of Valtetsi, in which local people claim that in 1821 the first victorious army of Greeks under Kolokotrones rose up against the Turks. Since the soldiers believed that the Virgin had aided that victory, taking part just as Hera and Athena did with their forces deployed in the Trojan War, a special church to the Virgin was built in the village in 1837. One of the most heinous

1:Sanders Z-5.4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

793 courts. The village priest, therefore, acquires land and farms, in many
[423] cases just as diligently as the other villagers; he may even embark upon a
[441] few small-scale business enterprises on the side. His regular salary from
[571] the state gives him a steady income which the rest of the local people usually lack. This, combined with thrift and diligence, helps him acquire a little more property than the average farmer and enjoy a slightly higher standard of living. This is not guaranteed, of course, and one can call to mind many village priests who obviously were living on the barest minimum. At the same time, the priest is able to maintain what has been called
[554] a "comradely equality" with his people.[8]

[794] The priest, however, is not necessarily a permanent fixture. The bishop appoints him to a post and the local congregation can refuse him, or it can raise objections to a bishop about a priest who conducts himself in ways the local people do not like. In most cases, the bishop tries to find the kind of priest that the local parishioners prefer. Since the priest often acquires land, as has been pointed out, he wants to pass that on to his children. He may try to persuade one son at least to follow him in the service of the church. In one Peloponnesian village I found that a priest's son now off at the seminary was coming back to succeed his father, thus making a fourth generation of priests from the same family serving that parish. When I mentioned this to bishops and others familiar with church matters, they pointed out that this was a common phenomenon, and even gave the names of villages where a fifth-generation member from the same family was ministering to the same parish.

[428]

Should a parish vacancy occur, the bishop, who is informed about it as a matter of course, announces in the local papers as well as in the church papers that there is a vacancy in such and such a village and that all qualified people may apply. He goes through the applications, selects the eligible candidates, and posts their names on the door of the cathedral, with the notice that anyone who knows any reason why these people should not serve as priests should inform the bishop. After due time has elapsed, he makes the choice, giving heavy weight, according to one bishop who discussed this, to educational qualifications and moral considerations.

793 In pursuing in greater detail the relationship between the parish priest
465 and the state, I learned that it was under the leadership of Archbishop
[659] (Metropolitan) Damaskinos, who played such an important part in helping his country through the politically troubled waters from German occupation back to self-government, that the priests were put on a salary paid by the state. Before that, they had been paid from fees and also by products from the parishioners. *Kondota,* or the subscription by families of so much wheat, eggs, olive oil, and such, to the priest if he would serve them was
[794] widely practiced before the present salary arrangement was made. In round figures, the parishes now contribute about one fourth of the amount

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

in a handkerchief, thereby putting the priest under his control so he will do no harm. But, bad luck or not, the priest is indispensable. At numerous repasts celebrating a christening, a nameday, or some other important event, we had to wait what seemed an interminable length of time because the priest could not arrive any earlier. Without him, nothing could get under way. One serious student of Greek rural life said: "In Greece when a priest is missing, it is a great calamity, for the Greek is not used to praying by himself without a priest." [11] In earlier days when the belief in vampires was much more widespread than today, it was the priest, the minister of God, who alone had any power over them. He could calm the fears of the people.

The responsibility for the local parish does not fall entirely upon the priest, although the chief responsibility is his. There is a church board, consisting of three to five members, with the priest as president. The nominations for this board are submitted to the bishop by the priest, and the bishop designates them as official members of the board. One member of the board is the treasurer. When these local officials are asked just what their duties are, they usually include in their replies: to help the priest, to look after the finances, and to care for the church building. This board has as one of its chief duties the sale of the candles in the church vestibule and can use the proceeds of the sale for local church needs. In most communities it is considered a great honor to serve as a member of this board, although this position requires much work and frequently has more responsibility than the presidency of the local cooperative.

A recent development is the growth of the Sunday school, held after the regular morning service. Young boys, girls, and a few women are usually found in attendance, although young people up to the age of twenty are urged to attend. Throughout much of Greece the priest gives the instruction, although in Northern Greece we found many villages where the teacher had taken over this extra duty. Usually the same lesson is given to all age groups at the same time. It is customary in some places, such as the Attic villages we visited, for the school to be held on a weekday by the teacher, in which case it was not called Sunday school but "the preaching school."

The heart, however, of the Greek Orthodox Church — as of many other Christian bodies — is the Sunday-morning Mass. Anyone attending cannot help but notice the building itself, usually in the shape of a Greek cross, with the ends terminating in apses. Over the center there is a dome representing heaven. In front, the altar screen (*eikonostasion*), on which one finds the icons or pictures of various saints, separates the altar (*vema*), which no woman can enter, from the nave, where the worshippers congregate.[12] The priest moves back and forth between altar and nave in what seems a random manner to the uninitiated. As he turns to face the altar,

1:Sanders Z-5,d (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

the icon of Christ is on his right and that of St. John the Baptist next to it. To his left one sees on the altar the icon of the Virgin, and farther to the left the icon of the saint for whom the church was named.

The congregation stands during the service, except for a few infirm who can lean against supports along the wall; there is no instrumental music, as the priest and the chanter carry the service themselves in a language that much of the time is unintelligible to the worshippers. The gospels are read in Koine, or New Testament Greek, and the liturgy, written by St. John Chrysostom toward the end of the fourth century, is in the Greek of that period. When the priest delivers a sermon, he uses his version of katharevousa, if he is sufficiently schooled; otherwise, he speaks in demotike. Apparently the worshippers are moved by the ceremony, the procession, the swinging censers, and the chanting even more than by the actual meaning of the words to which they listen. Now and then in the liturgy, however, come familiar passages which most can understand because of having learned their meaning in school or from some relative.

The worshippers, among whom small children may be running or tugging, include very few men. They come out for special festival services but show no interest in the regular Sunday-morning service, which is viewed as the woman's social hour. Even during the service women catch up on the latest happenings throughout the village.

The priest, however, is busy at other times, too. Dorothy Lee describes it this way:

> Religion permeates Greek life, punctuating it with ritual. No Greek, urban or rural, would think of initiating anything important without a religious inauguration. Schools open with the inaugurative *agiasmos*, "making holy"; the foundation stone of every house is laid with *agiasmos;* merchants begin new undertakings with the proper religious inauguration. On Epiphany, the sea is made holy for those who journey on it. In the country, blessed water is carried from the Epiphany Mass to sprinkle on the fields. The Virgin and the Saints are invoked, but not mainly as correctives; their main function is to endow an undertaking with good and success, it is not primarily to prevent or correct. . . . Priests are called in, and Saints and the Virgin invoked, also, when difficulties arise. Vows are made for the recovery of a loved one; the priest is called when the family has had a run of misfortune, to "make holy" and exorcise the evil. Priests conduct a rain litany to break a drought.[13]

The parish as such consists of no such array of organized groups as comprise an American congregation; the priest is not trying to convert the unbeliever or change the daily life of his people. He is there to help them meet life's emergencies, to instill a love for their religion and their country, and to act as peacemaker when disputes threaten the harmony of the community.[14]

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The Bishop of Messenia and His Good Works

793 The contrast between an ordinary priest's home and the bishop's palace
794 in Kalamata is quite marked, for the latter was once the ornate building
[346] housing the local branch of the Bank of Greece. But the bishop's interest in the people of his diocese, both the city dwellers in Kalamata and the farmers in the surrounding villages, equaled that of any priest for his parishioners. The bishop, when visited in 1953, proved a friendly, jovial person, with an iron-gray beard, a dignified though rotund figure, and a very forward-looking social philosophy. It was this latter quality in particular that had made me seek him out after hearing from friends in Athens of his unusual achievements in the welfare field.

He began to talk about what he had done and hoped to do for his people: "I became interested when I saw their great needs, for, as a church leader, I am responsible for the welfare of whatever people are under me." But before he started on any specific projects after his arrival in this diocese, he had thought it best, as he phrased it, "to put myself at the disposal of the people." He gradually gained the confidence of the members of his diocese by making available to them for local use all of the church's funds derived from festivals. The people began to realize that this bishop was interested in them. Later on, when he began asking them to support the various projects which he started, they gladly cooperated.

793 His first project was a day nursery, which takes care of one hundred and
747 twenty children whose mothers are at work, started in 1947. Visiting this nursery in the afternoon when all of the children had gone home, we noted the cleanliness and the simple but adequate facilities. The success of this nursery prompted the bishop to start another one in Mycenae for one hundred children in 1948.

736 One perplexing problem was that of illegitimate children. In many cases
793 the mother would kill such a child or leave it with people who exploited it
848 unmercifully. So he started a home for these children in 1947. Since then, two hundred and fifty children have gone through the home, sixty of them
[597] have been adopted and fifty were there then. The equipment was simple
[847] and bare, but everything was spotless. When we entered, the children came up to the bishop with great pleasure, for he is a favorite with the young children. One of the nurses told us: "When we have a child that is lonesome, who won't eat, we ask the bishop to come feed the child. When he comes, the child always eats."

793 The bishop noticed, however, that many of the boy foundlings, but rela-
736 tively few of the girl foundlings, would be adopted. The boys who were not taken by foster parents by their fifth or sixth year would go into the National
[597] Boys' Orphanage of Kalamata, largely supported by the state, which had
[657] one hundred and fifty boys in 1953. Something had to be done for the girls.

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

783 788 because the mere act of bringing whatever they had to contribute gave them an emotional uplift.

793 But still we had not seen the end of the bishop's good works. In 1949 he had organized a home for the aged where seventy elderly people live in [737] relative comfort. The most ambitious project of all, however, was a polytechnic school started for the youth of the area. He had already spent about [874] $37,000 on the first floor alone. The school had opened the previous [177] November (1952) and already had two hundred pupils. Here was an institution that the Marshall Plan had helped. The school bore the name Papaflessa, in honor of one of the Greek patriots of the war of independence. While looking over this school we also learned about one more activity, a hospital of one hundred and fifty beds whose foundation had just recently been laid by the bishop and his coworkers.

793 794 The financing of even one of these undertakings, not to say the whole complement of institutions, would be a staggering task in any country, especially in one as poorly endowed as Greece. Although the bishop never confided the secret of his success, I heard from others that skillful diplomacy had stood him in good stead. He would start with a certain amount that he could take from his bishop's fund; he would then go to Athens and persuade the people in the Welfare Ministry that local people would match the funds of the central government if it would contribute; then, back home, he would call together the leading businessmen and say that he could get so much from the central government if they would put up such-and-such an amount. Since all parties did their share, he was able to get the necessary money for capital expenditures.

793 794 For the operation of these institutions, and their total number of inmates or patients is considerable, he draws upon other resources. Some of the people in his diocese upon death will to some specified institution their [428] homes, olive groves, or money. Instead of having an expensive memorial [769] service, with several priests, for a dead relative at the stated periods required by the church, the people are having simple memorial services and giving the difference in what they would pay to an institution; instead of buying expensive wreaths, they are giving the money to the foundling home, the sanatorium, or perhaps the old people's home. The bishop, too, has organized the rural parishes so that each parish turns over olive oil, meat, cheese, and eggs to a person who collects this produce and distributes it to the institution. Or, as already mentioned, some of the people want to bring their contributions in person. Many are asked to donate labor: one builds a door, another puts in windows, and everybody has a sense of participating.

Visiting the bishop raised many questions in my mind about all that I had learned in America about modern child-welfare practices, care of the [748] aged, and the like. Social work as a profession is just getting a start in Greece; much humanitarian activity is carried on by upper-class women of

1:Sanders Z-5,4 (1952-1959) 1962 EH1 Greece EH1

the cities in the spirit of *noblesse oblige*. Under the circumstances in Greece today, nothing could seem more natural to the local people than to have the church, in the person of a gifted bishop, work out arrangements to meet their pressing welfare needs. How such a complicated network of institutions would be kept going should the energetic bishop not be around was a matter that gave one pause; but one must live in the present when human lives are at stake, and that is what the bishop was doing. He was following a well-established practice in making the church the channel for helping others.

The kind of help called *psychiko* is done for the soul, for the forgiveness of the souls of one's dead loved ones; it is customarily given in the form of helping the poor members of the community — the sick, the widows, and the orphans — out of purely Christian feeling. When some family is suffering misfortune in a village, the priest announces the fact in church and invites those who can help to do so. This is a form of aid in which those helping are not usually repaid, which makes it differ from the kinds of mutual aid discussed in an earlier chapter. In Koroni, in the western Peloponnesos, for instance, if a widow needs a crop harvested or threshed, grapes picked, or some field work done, the priest will announce that on such and such a day this widow has *xelassi*, as this arrangement is called, and those who wish can go to help. She feeds them, but they derive a spiritual rather than a material benefit from the work they contribute.

Or in Epirus, some important member of the community, not the priest, may send out the town crier or field guard to call from some height: "Listen, village, tomorrow we will carry from the mountain some wood for the home of Kyra Tassena, the widow of Tasso. All those who have mules must send them and those who haven't got any must come to help. Nobody must be missing." [15] He will then close with the proverb, *tona cheiri nivi talo kai ta dio to prosopo* (the one hand washes the other, and both of them the face).

Sundays and holidays, days on which peasants are not supposed to work in their own fields, are quite suitable for psychiko, or work done for the good of one's soul. D. A. Petropoulos, on whose article much of this discussion of psychiko is based, maintains that what characteristically distinguishes Christian philanthropy from ancient Greek philanthropy is that the first connects religion with the salvation of the soul, while in the ancient days help was given out of a purely logical understanding in order to have a normal social and communal system.[16]

The transition from this method of dealing with human need to the professional approach of contemporary social work is quite a leap. What progress is being made in training social workers in Greece is through the Young Women's Christian Association (but this again is a semireligious attachment), or through the Queen's Fund, providing scholarships at Pierce College.

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the members of several farm households get supplementary income from various sources besides wage labor. Bee-keeping, for example, is becoming an increasingly popular supplementary activity. Three households have as many as a dozen hives and sell the honey. A few households raise pigeons as an extra source of food, and now and then one or two may join together to raise a pig. One farmer's son has what might be called the "fish concession" in Vasilika. He contracts to buy the fresh fish from an itinerant vendor and then sells the fish in Vasilika at a tiny profit.

The proprietorship of the coffeehouses in Vasilika enables two of Vasilika's households substantially to supplement the income which they derive from their agricultural holdings.

Two young, still unmarried girls have had training as dressmakers. One of the girls, who learned her skill in Athens, spends all her time sewing and rarely contributes to fieldwork on the farm. The second girl, who had her apprenticeship in Levadhia, works on clothes for her customers in intervals between all her field and household chores. Every woman in the village can do some sewing and several have foot-driven machines, but the two seamstresses are kept busy and add to the cash income of their households.

The traditional role of the village priest is occupied in Vasilika by a substantial farmer, with a wife, five grown children, and several grandchildren. He not only performs his regular religious duties but is also the head of the church and the few properties owned by it. He receives a small salary from the state, and also derives income from performing baptisms, weddings, and funerals. Greek Orthodox tradition requires the priest to officiate at other occasions, such as the dedication of a new home or the termination of a woman's forty days of seclusion after childbirth, and he receives small money gifts for these services. But on the tax rolls of the community the priest's occupation is listed as farmer. This is a reasonable designation because both he and his wife, natives of the village, have inherited some local lands. The priest's household, therefore, participates in the agricultural cycle common to the rest of the farmers. Although the priest now confines himself largely to supervision, if there is an unexpected need for extra labor, he tucks up his flowing robes and pitches in.

The village church organization provides for three additional salaried posts: two farmers serve as chanters and an elderly widow as sexton. Finally, the formal political organization of the village includes the position of secretary to the village council. This office is a minor civil service post which requires no qualification other than literacy, pays a small monthly stipend, and is usually held by the appointee as long as he performs his duties satisfactorily.

In all the cases just described, the supplementary activities are superimposed on the grape-wheat-cotton-tobacco farming base. The shepherds of contemporary Vasilika, however, have a significantly different round of life which there is insufficient space to discuss fully here.

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watch the plays, and together concentrate their attention for over an hour on exactly the same activity.

The Village Church

The affairs of the church in Vasilika are administered by the priest with the aid of a committee of four men. Committee members are selected for three-year terms by the bishop from a list sent by the priest. One of the members of the committee is the treasurer for the church. He makes the collections at services and generally supervises the church's funds. In Vasilika income for the church is derived from the Sunday collections, the sale of offerings of wheat and olive oil made on special feast days, the sale of candles, rent on church property such as the old school building and the community office (both of these buildings were put up by the church as an investment), and the sale of produce from some twenty church-owned *stremata*. The priest is now given a small salary by the national government, but one-quarter of the church's income must be returned to the national treasury as a partial contribution of the community to the priest's salary. The other expenses of the church include the salaries (eighty drachmas a month) paid to each of the chanters and to the sexton. In Vasilika, the latter office is held by a sixty-year-old woman who is often assisted in her duties by her grandchildren. The physical maintenance of the buildings is also a responsibility of the church committee, and in 1959 they arranged for an extensive renovation of the main church.

The description just given is that of the formal organization of church affairs. In Vasilika the priest himself has more than his share of influence on all decisions and, indeed, it was said that one of the committee members in 1956 never went to any meetings of the church committee (they are said to be held about four times a year). The priest is a native of Vasilika, in his sixties. He is a strong, vigorous, and imposing figure, somewhat taller than the average villager and with a personality, temper, and voice to match. As he chants the liturgy the priest's deep voice fills the church, so that the elegant cadences of the Greek Orthodox mass gain added beauty. Because the priest and his sons have arranged his patrimony well, the priest as a private landowner is one of the more prosperous men in the village and for that reason, as well as for his personal qualities, he commands considerable respect.

Under the leadership of the priest, church affairs can, on rare occasions, involve the entire male population of the village. At about one o'clock on a rainy Sunday afternoon in the fall of 1955, the church bell rang. The men and the boys of the village streamed down the hill into the *agbora*. There they stood in the heavy rain as the priest, in his flowing black robes, as usual, and holding the only umbrella in the gathering over himself, began an impassioned oration. Several men responded with equal eloquence and after about a half-hour of speeches, they disbanded. It seems that one of the shepherds, who had rented a church-owned small house, was refusing to pay the rent asked of him. He had

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been threatened with eviction but had not responded even to this. The priest had called the men of the community together to try to get backing for his decision to evict the man. The authority was granted him on that rainy Sunday, but the shepherd finally agreed to go part way toward meeting the demand and continued to live in the house.

Religious Feast Days

If the formal organization of church affairs involves village-wide action or concern only in times of crisis, certain feasts and ceremonies of the Greek Orthodox Church certainly provide a focus of interest for the entire village at regular intervals during the year. The most conspicuous of these is the sequence of events by which the villagers celebrate Easter. The Sunday before Lent begins is the particular day which starts the holiday observances in Vasilika. After church services, children ran about in the morning trying to throw powdered soot at each other and at unsuspecting adults. Later in the day, the children and unmarried men and women dressed in costumes in preparation for the arrival of the musicians—this time there were a clarinetist, a violinist, and the player of a *sanduri* (dulcimer). Some boys and girls dressed as animals and their trainers went around in groups trying to frighten the very small children or just laughing at their own antics. The young people dressed themselves as gypsies, and some of the boys put on women's clothes and walked around with mincing steps and female gestures, while some of the girls donned men's clothes and twirled false moustaches. Throughout the afternoon and early evening the musicians sat in the *aghora* and the young people and their elders danced in the space between the two coffeehouses, as virtually all the rest of the village population sat and watched. Some spectators sat at the coffeehouse tables drinking beer or soda; others brought chairs from home to sit along the walls of the houses near the *aghora*. Still others watched from second-story windows overlooking the area. All the spectators sat quietly and without expression. Those who danced paid the musicians and occasionally the watchers would proffer a glass of *ouzo* (anise liqueur) to the male dancers and to the musicians.

The dances themselves were the most commonly known traditional round dances of the Greek countryside: the *kalamatyanos*, *sirtos*, and *tsamikos*, danced in Vasilika by both men and women, but usually not at the same time. Men danced the *zembekikos* and the *khasapikos* as solos.

On this occasion, and on any other when musicians came to the village, the women of some of the more sophisticated families joined their male relatives sitting around the small coffeehouse tables.

In the evening, several families joined together for a meat-eating feast, after which bonfires were lit in different sections of the village; this time the adults joined in the carnival spirit of practical jokes and danced and sang in the security of their own neighborhoods until early morning. The next day is "Clean Monday." Many of the villagers visited Kifisokhori, which has a carnival

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with a float competition on this day. In 1956, the winning float was a huge replica of the Trojan horse.

The events of Holy Week, with their culmination in the feasting and dancing on Easter Sunday, are from the villagers' point of view the most important time of the year. They anticipate *to Paskha* all the rest of the year; the women in particular asked about how Americans celebrated Easter more frequently than they asked about any other American custom, and whenever any general discussion of different customs came up, the women would spontaneously start describing Holy Week. Not the least of the reasons for the anticipation of Easter is that it is a spring festival and the villagers wait impatiently for spring. They look forward to the warmth of the sun after the cold and rainy winter, and they speak with affection of the beauty of the wild flowers which cover the hillsides in early spring.

During Holy Week in 1956, Maundy Thursday services began at 8:40 in the evening. Men and boys, as well as some women who rarely attended Sunday mass, appeared for the service, and on Good Friday and Easter Sunday virtually the entire village population, except for tiny infants and those who had to care for them, was present. By Thursday evening, relatives of the villagers from the surrounding villages and towns and from Athens had begun to arrive and to appear at the church. Just as on ordinary Sundays, the church filled gradually as the service progressed. Older men stood at the stalls up front, and several elderly women and pregnant women sat on chairs which were brought in for them and were placed in the back of the church in the woman's section. Women visitors were offered chairs; some accepted, some did not. Two of the village women got tired at one point and squatted on the floor, but as usual, the children, the younger men, and almost all the girls and women stood throughout. The service lasted until 11:00. In the course of it, there was considerable restlessness and low-voiced conversation among the men and giggling among the girls. But at the culmination of the service, when the image of Jesus on the Cross was brought from behind the screened altar and placed in the center of the church, there was complete quiet.

Many of the villagers can recite or chant the portions of the New Testament which are read as part of the Holy Week services, and do so under their breath—really only to themselves, since the priest and the chanters sing the chants aloud. Even among these villagers, however, very few have a literal understanding of the text, for it is in New Testament Greek, which is a generalized form of Eastern Mediterranean Greek developed in the last centuries of the pagan and early centuries of the Christian era. It is therefore about as different from the contemporary demotic Greek spoken in the village as Chaucerian English is from Modern English. Nevertheless, all the villagers know the main outlines of the New Testament depicting the crucifixion, death, and resurrection of Christ, and know which portions are being sung and symbolically re-enacted at each of the Holy Week services.

The villagers say that on Good Friday no one should work either in the fields or in the house, but these prohibitions were not strictly adhered to. In the

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candles from the priest's, or from each other's if they got impatient waiting to reach the priest. The second climax was, of course, the moment when, with the entire congregation standing outside the church, the priest announced, *"Khristos anesti,"* "Christ is risen," and the boys set off firecrackers.

After the service, people took a short nap, because by 6:00 in the morning, final preparations for Easter dinner would start. As has already been indicated, families joined with neighbors or relatives to eat the spit-roasted Easter lamb. Visiting relatives moved about to greet the villagers they knew. Baptisms, which had been arranged for the afternoon because prospective godparents enjoyed visiting the village at Easter, took place in the church, and the white baptismal clothes of the babies added sparkle to all the Easter finery. After an afternoon service in the church of St. Nicholas, the musicians came, settled in the *aghora,* and dancing began. But fewer villagers participated in either the dancing or the watching than at Carnival, because people preferred to spend more time at home with their visiting relatives. Nevertheless, a good crowd kept the *aghora* musicians occupied until eight in the evening, after which singing could be heard here and there about the village. The next day some of the young boys claimed to have been up singing half the night.

The description just given is only a brief outline of the main events and lacks many details of the village's celebration of Easter. My purpose in including it here is to illustrate the point that Carnival and Holy Week are times at which the Greek Orthodox rites and the accompanying customs provide activities in which all villagers participate at the same time and within the confines of Vasilika. Even under these circumstances, however, the visiting relatives act as a countervailing centrifugal force, pulling each family in the direction of its extra-village interests, as they use the holiday visit as an opportunity for family consultations on the problems of the coming year, and as the visitors tell of their lives in other villages, in towns, and in the cities.

Vasilika's *paniyiri,* the feast day of its patron saints, St. Cosmos and St. Damian, on the 1st of July, is another occasion when a religious event is celebrated by the entire village and draws visitors to the community. Other holy days and Sunday masses do not draw all the villagers together in the same way. School children are the most faithful communicants for regular Sunday mass; a small proportion of women and girls attend regularly, but the rest of the inhabitants appear to attend sporadically, as they please. During periods of heavy agricultural work, mass may be omitted on a Sunday. For the most part, individuals and families, rather than the village, are the units for participation in the formal religious activity of the settlement.

The Villagers as Greeks

To summarize the situation, the formal organization of the village community, the *kinotis,* provides neither autonomy in village affairs nor a unified structure. Decisions made by the village leaders are subject to approval by outside political authorities. Governmental, commercial, religious, and educa-

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793 [795] direct personal responsibility, and delegates comparatively little to his curates. The ministry of the word, for example, is always the work of the bishop: the most that the parish priest is permitted to do is to read a homily sent him by his diocesan. In some dioceses the metropolitan alone preaches, and the country people hear sermons only when he is able to visit their villages. As a rule, however, the bishop will be assisted by a *hierokryx* or 'sacred herald'—'preacher' seems a miserably inadequate translation of such a splendid word—who is normally a priest-monk (though he may sometimes be a lay theologian), and lives in the metropolis. Often, too, the bishop and his *hierokryx* will be assisted by several lay preachers who go out into the villages Sunday by Sunday to preach at the liturgy.

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Thus, at Siderokastro (the 'Iron Castle'), close to the Bulgarian frontier, the Metropolitan, the Lord Basil, finding himself, when the refugees began to return to their villages in the summer of 1949, with only one priest qualified to assist him in the ministry of the word, formed a little society of lay preachers known as the Guardians of Spiritual Enlightenment, which included the headmaster of the local high school and one of his assistant masters, as well as the doctor and the dentist of the town and two or three other educated laymen, several of whom now go out to preach in the surrounding villages every Sunday.

A friend who visited the diocese of Chalkis during the 'thirties has told me of the ancient Fiat which used to leave the metropolis at daybreak every Sunday and scatter monkish theologians among the hamlets of Euboea. At Kozani, in western Macedonia, no sooner were the roads reasonably clear of mines in the summer of 1949 than the Metropolitan started to send out every Saturday afternoon an army truck laden with young catechists who would spend the week-end preaching and teaching in remote villages of the diocese and return to their work or their school on Monday morning.

793 783 What is true of preaching applies also to the sacrament of penance; it is to the bishop, not to his parish priest, that the villager who is oppressed with the consciousness of grave sin will turn for the benefits of absolution and ghostly counsel. The Greek priest is not allowed to act as a confessor without the express authorisation of his bishop. "As for Confession", says Covel, "it is not to be made to every ordinary Priest, but only to such Confessors . . . who are chosen out of monasteries, and are solemnly appointed and authorised to this Office . . . so that a regular or secular Priest not thus qualified, durst not attempt to

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take it." In the *Great Euchologion*, or Prayer Book, of the Greek Church the order for confession is in fact immediately preceded by a short office for the making of a *pneumatikos*, or spiritual father, in which the bishop, after he has read the Gospel containing our Lord's words: "Whose soever sins ye remit, they are remitted unto them; and whose soever sins ye retain, they are retained", addresses the would-be *pneumatikos* (who must, needless to say, be in priests' orders) as follows:

"Our mediocrity, through the grace of the all-holy and divine Spirit, promotes thee, the most pious N. *Pneumatikos*, to the ministry of spiritual fatherhood, etc."

Covel quotes ancient canons to the effect that "if any one without the Mandate of the Bishop of the place shall dare to receive . . . spiritual accounts and Confessions, such a one shall be Canonically punished as a Transgressor of the Divine Canons; because he hath not only destroy'd himself, but all they also who have been Confessed by him are still unconfessed, and whatever things he hath Bound or Loosed, are yet uncorrected". And again: "Let all the Priest-Monks, who take Confessions, or Bind and Loose know that our Holy Fathers will not suffer any Priests to reconcile Penitents without the Archbishop's Order". According to an old canonist "a Bishop may . . . according to his Judgment, give this Right or Power of receiving Confessions to a secular Priest, but this is to be done discreetly, to some choice or well approved Persons only, and upon some extraordinary occasions".

Professor Bratsiotes, in the introduction which he contributed to the English translation of the life of the Archimandrite Eusebius Matthopoulos, observed that "unhappily there are very few confessors, because it is much more difficult to develop confessors than to train preachers; and it requires much individual genius and great maturity in virtue and experience to be a proper confessor". At the time when these words were written only eight members of the Zoë Confraternity—all trained theologians as they are—were licensed as confessors. In the country dioceses to-day the only clergy who are permitted to assist the bishop as *pneumatikoi* are the priest-monks attached to the metropolis; married priests who are authorised to hear confessions are rare indeed.

What then of the parish clergy? There is no parallel in Greece to the country parson who has "read the Fathers also and the Schoolmen and the later writers", and who has been one of the fairest ornaments of the English Church these many centuries. The Greek country parson is a

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are chosen. Before presenting himself to a bishop the candidate for ordination must decide finally and irrevocably to what state of life he is called, since marriage is not permitted after ordination. This rule, as will appear when we come to consider the training of the Greek clergy, gives rise to many grave practical problems.

Such then, very briefly, is the framework of the diocesan and parochial organisation. The married clergy, "in parishes, residing on their cures", form a distinct class with well-defined duties and limitations peculiar to their condition; while the general administration of the diocese, the ministries of preaching and confessing, together with the organisation of the catechetical schools and Christian Unions which have become so important an element in the pattern of Greek church life within the last few years, are the immediate responsibility of the metropolitan assisted by his headquarters staff of monks and lay theologians.

The Greek bishop is still in a very real sense the *persona* of his diocese: the natural leader of the whole community in matters temporal as well as spiritual. Not for nothing is he commonly referred to as ὁ Δεσπότης, 'the Despot'. During the Turkish occupation the power of the bishop within his own diocese was all but unbounded, and as he had formerly mediated between his people and the Turkish authorities so, more recently, it was he who commonly bore the heaviest burden of responsibility during the occupation of Greece by the Axis troops. Archbishop Damaskinos was called to play, on a wider stage and before a larger audience, it is true, a part which was being sustained no less faithfully, albeit more obscurely, by many of his brethren in the provincial towns of Greece during the years from 1941 to 1945. Though times have changed since the day when the people of Salonica overthrew the minarets of the fleeing oppressor with such patriotic and religious ardour that many casualties were caused by the falling masonry, the Greek bishop still maintains a style befitting his position. The metropolis (where it has survived the destruction of the war years) is generally amongst the most impressive and substantial structures of a provincial town, and though the bishop is readily accessible to all and sundry, he nevertheless bears himself with considerable dignity. When he walks abroad, carrying a silver-headed staff and accompanied by a deacon, the people draw aside to let him pass, bowing their heads and putting off their caps. The faithful who come to the metropolis—whether they be peasants from some nearby hamlet or senior army officers from the

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793 [576] garrison, it makes no difference—bow to kiss the hand of their father in God and greet him with the word *proskyno*, 'I worship': with that same *proskynesis* which is offered to the eikons of the saints, and which is not to be confounded with the *latreia* which we accord to the Three Persons of the consubstantial Trinity alone.

For the Greek bishop is not merely 'the Despot'. He is moreover 'the Saint'. Thus, one may frequently hear the country people refer to their metropolitan as ὁ ἅγιος Ἐδέσσης, ὁ ἅγιος Ἐλευθερουπόλεως, 'the Saint of Edessa, the Saint of Eleftheroupolis', etc., in recognition of the objective sanctity which attaches to the episcopal office, quite independently of the moral character of him who occupies it. If the bishop is the despot, tracing his ancestry back to those local potentates who flourished during the last days of the Byzantine Empire, he is also the successor of the apostles, the bearer of more than temporal power; binding and loosing and wielding an anathema which can arrest the normal processes of dissolution to which the body is subject after death; a father in God to whom the humblest member of his scattered flock can turn in need or perplexity, for ghostly counsel or for material aid.

For all the dignity attaching to his high office the Greek bishop is commonly the most approachable of men; the sheer accessibility of the generality of the bishops of the country dioceses is a matter for wonder and rejoicing in a world fallen beneath the curse of an impersonal and irresponsible bureaucracy. Every morning, his liturgy fulfilled, the [794] metropolitan takes his seat in his office and all the world comes to see him: Papa Iannis, who needs a new cassock, and Papa Athanasi who wants to go to the recently established seminary, although he forsook the scholars' bench to look after his father's sheep while he was yet in the second class of his village school; an elderly widow whose son requires medical attention comes to ask for help from the Fund for the Poor.

[438] Go almost any forenoon to the metropolis at Salonica, a few yards from the windy quays where gaily painted caiques discharge their cargoes of charcoal and resinated wine, timber from the slopes of Athos, and lemons and pottery from the islands of the Aegean, and observe the crowds who throng the steps awaiting an opportunity to dart into the office of 'the Saint of Myra', who sits at his desk beneath an eikon of the Pantocrator, questioning, counselling, reproving and writing letters of commendation, while a stalwart archimandrite leans against the door with outstretched arm to keep the multitude without at bay.

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deacons attached to parish churches. More often, however, the deacon is a monk and belongs to the *familia* of a bishop, whom he serves as personal attendant and factotum. Outside the larger towns one never finds a deacon attached to a parish but always on the staff of the metropolis and retaining his close connexion with the bishop. In the two university towns there is always a sprinkling of young deacons who have been sent by their monastic superiors to study at the theological schools and who are attached to a parish church during their four years at the university. Many of these student-deacons are also permitted to preach. It may be noted in passing that in the Orthodox world an archdeacon is in fact, and not merely in name, a deacon, and is, moreover, a person of some consequence.

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The English churchman, even when faced with the present acute and continuing shortage of clergy, is with difficulty persuaded that the laity are called to play an active part in the evangelistic work of the Church. Everywhere in the west the lay theologian is something of a phenomenon. A young man does not read theology at Oxford or Cambridge unless he intends to be a parson: theology is surely the concern of the clergy? It is well, therefore, that we should realise that in Greece (and throughout Orthodox Christendom for that matter), very different notions as to the active ministry of the laity prevail. The lay catechist, theologian and preacher fulfil a ministry that is scarcely less essential to the life of the Greek Church than that proper to bishop, priest and deacon respectively. How varied and important this lay ministry can be, will, I hope, become clearer when we come to consider the work of a movement such as the Brotherhood of Theologians, Zoë and the organisations connected with it. A very large share of the responsibility for the great spiritual upheaval of recent years must be assigned to lay men and women: the majority of the voluntary movements and associations are predominantly lay in character.

If I may venture upon a generalisation, I would assert that among ordinary Orthodox Christians one commonly finds a greater sense of responsibility for the Church than can be looked for in western Christendom to-day. The Church does not tend, as it does so often in the west, to be identified in the thought of ordinary men and women with the clergy; nor is it said of a young man who offers himself for ordination

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794 that he is 'going into the Church'. For the Orthodox, every Christian is in some sense called to be a theologian: to verify in his own life and experience the truths which are set forth in scripture and tradition; and although the bishop has, in virtue of his office, a peculiar responsibility for bearing witness to the *paradosis* which enshrines the saving truth of the Gospel, it is a responsibility that is shared by every lively member of the Church—by the laity no less than by the ordained ministry which is called to perform a particular function within the one body. In this connexion it may be remarked that monasticism, among the Orthodox, has never developed into a predominantly clerical institution. As in the early days of Benedictine monachism, the majority of Greek monks are peasants of little education; very few are in orders —a community of forty or fifty *kalogeroi* may well include only two or three priests or deacons.

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From about 1936 onwards the voluntary religious movements, which had already obtained widespread recognition in the Athens-Piraeus region, as well as in several provincial centres of Old Greece, began to take an important place within the normal diocesan and parochial system but in some measure as supplementary to it. To-day their influence has spread to the remotest corners of the Kingdom of the Hellenes, and no balanced account of the organisation of the Church of Greece can fail to give a prominent place to these predominantly lay movements which (under the general supervision of the hierarchy and with full episcopal approval) now play so vital a part in almost every aspect of the Church's life and evangelistic work.

The more one sees of these movements and of their widespread influence, the more one realises how different might have been the present condition of the Church of England had the Methodists not been forced to go into schism at the end of the eighteenth century. There is indeed a striking analogy between the situation in Greece to-day and that of the *Ecclesia Anglicana* as it might have been had the Methodists remained within her fold and continued to receive the sacraments of the one body at the hands of their parish clergy while exercising, under the general control and supervision of the episcopate, a lay apostolate of their own. The tragic character of that schism cannot but be brought home to anyone who has lived and worshipped among Greek Christians during recent years, has seen the apostolic labours of lay men and women as theologians, preachers and catechists, and has realised that this Church—at first sight so rigidly hierarchical—is in

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fact in no merely superficial sense the Church of the laity: a Church whose every member, whether clerk or layman, is called to exercise an active apostolate appropriate to his status and vocation—"for the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ".

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and his mitre in its brass box, were borne away to the church on a flood of ragged boys, and we followed rather more sedately while the bells jangled in the tower. The Metropolitan went straight to his throne on the south side of the church after vesting in the open narthex, and I was led to the stall on his right, immediately beneath the great eikon of the Pantocrator in the dome. The church had been recently redecorated and a gay diaper pattern now covered every part of the interior that was not frescoed. Not for the first time I was struck by the contrast between the comeliness and colour of the village church and the squalid dwellings which surrounded it. The little groups of people who had followed us up the stony path from the *mesochori*, or village-square, crowded into the church, setting up their candles before the eikons of our Lord and His Mother, bringing loaves bearing the seal "Jesus Christ conquers" and wine for the offering, oil for the lamps and lists of relatives and friends, both living and departed, to be commemorated at the liturgy that morning. The parish priest came with the singers and the verger to ask the Bishop's blessing, and the morning office (the first part of which had been sung before our arrival) was taken up again.

While the Magnificat was being sung, the parish priest went all about the building censing the holy things and the holy people with a proper indiscrimination, and when the great doxology was reached the sacristan ran down the church and set the three chandeliers swinging in alarming fashion while the belfry again resounded to the clash of metal. Mattins gave place to the divine liturgy; the church became more and more crowded till the people filled the narthex and overflowed down the steps into the path outside. The scouts arrived; the chandeliers swung more slowly, scattering drops of molten wax upon the heads of the congregation and splashing the strip of brightly coloured carpet which extended from the holy table down into the midst of the church; the incense and the venerable prayers rose to heaven, and the children scrambled up the stair leading to the high pulpit or balanced on the backs of the stalls occupied by their grandfathers.

The Epistle (from St. Paul's letter to the Philippians), was read by the chief singer, or *psaltes*, a soldier from the garrison at Nevrokopi who had learned the traditional chant in some village church on Pangaion, overlooking the ruined basilica where "the saints in Christ Jesus which were in Philippi" celebrated in their day that same holy offering in which we at Dasoto were taking part. There, like the ragged boys who now pressed upon him from all sides, he had joined with slowly growing

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796 794 533 confidence in the familiar chants, had had a hand clapped precisely to his mouth when he rashly ventured upon the uncharted depths of one less familiar, and little by little had attained to his present mastery of his art. This is the universal method for training singers: the Greeks know nothing of the prolonged agony of choir-practices. As a boy gains confidence he will occasionally be permitted to sing the Epistle at the liturgy: it is by no means unusual, even in a big urban parish, to see such a 'reader'—perhaps not more than twelve or thirteen years of age.

796 The Gospel was sung from the throne—not from the pulpit—by the parish priest, and, as is customary, was followed immediately by the sermon. The men and boys parted to allow the Bishop to reach his throne, and then closed in solidly around him: a sea of intent faces stretching from the doors of the sanctuary out through the shadowed narthex into the fierce glare of sunlight beyond. The sermon, as befitted the occasion, was homely both in language and illustration. The Bishop took his text from the Gospel appointed for the feast: "Yea rather, blessed are they that hear the word of God and keep it". He pictured the two sisters: Martha, "cumbered about much serving" (a pungent sipasng reference to certain absent members of his flock who were so preoccupied with their chaffering that they could ill spare an hour or two to come to church), and Mary, who "sat at Jesus' feet and heard His word". It was well that we should hearken to the divine word; that we should come to church and hear the holy Gospels read Sunday by Sunday. It was still more to the point, however, that we should be not mere hearers of the word but doers also; that we should not only *bear* the word of God but *keep* it. Therein lay the true holiness of that other Mary, the Mother of the Word. It was on account of her entire conformity to the divine will that we venerated her, the fiery chariot of the word, the bush burning and yet unconsumed, above every creature: above the bodiless powers and the choirs of archangels, above the cherubim and seraphim who veil their faces before the unapproachable glory.

"For us too, my children", the Bishop went on, "this is the sure way of salvation. There are no bounds to the creative energy of the word in the life of the Christian who surrenders himself in simplicity to its power". A series of illustrations followed: the eunuch of Queen Candace, hearing the divine word and straightway being baptised; the converting power of the word as revealed in the life of St. Augustine —a father who figures so infrequently in the discourses of Greek prelates

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as to lead me to suspect the offering of a discreet compliment to western Christendom; the fruits of the word, love, joy and peace, made manifest in the life and death of the blessed Polycarp. 796

"And you boys", said the Bishop, with 'a diligent and busy cast of his eye' toward certain of the more youthful of his auditors; "you who steal eggs and fruit and take other people's food out of the communal oven: there is no reason why you—if you keep the word of God faithfully—should not be as great as St. Peter or St. Paul, or why at the end of your lives you should not be able to echo those ever-memorable words of Polycarp: 'These eighty and six years have I been His servant' . . ."

Looking round that crowded church, my mind went to the Whitsuntide hymn: "Blessed art thou, O Christ our God, who hast made the fishermen wise by the sending down upon them of the Holy Spirit, and through them hast drawn the world into thy net."

The sermon ended, the singers took up the solemn chant of the Hymn of the Cherubim, and a hush fell upon the congregation as the ministers with their attendants emerged from the prothesis chapel and made their slow circuit of the church, the veiled oblations borne aloft, to the accompaniment of that all-embracing appeal: [533]

> May the Lord God be mindful of us all
> in His kingdom, always, now and for ever,
> and unto the ages of ages.

The holy gifts were carried up within the sanctuary and laid upon the altar. The singers resumed their interrupted hymn; the atmosphere was heavy with incense—which, say the commentators, is here an emblem of the mixture of myrrh and aloes which Nicodemus brought for the entombment of the Lord: [782]

> Lo, Christ is crucified, the Life is buried,
> the tomb is made fast, the stone is sealed.

Two shallow alms-baskets piled high with tattered notes were passed slowly round the church, while the sacristan sprinkled perfume from a pewter vessel into the outstretched hands of the more accessible among the male members of the congregation. [794]

The long drawn-out alleluias died away into silence as the parish [788]

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HEAVEN UPON EARTH

The liturgical movement in the west is nothing less than a reassertion of the true nature of the liturgy and of its place in the life of the Church, springing from a recovered vision of the nature of the Christian mystery, and from the realisation that dogma and scripture can never be isolated from the living liturgical tradition of the worshipping community without serious impoverishment and distortion. Its scope embraces a far wider field than the province of the liturgiologist, and though it is commonly associated with such 'ecclesiastical' matters as the purifying of the traditional chant and the reform of ceremonial, it is ultimately concerned with fundamental theological realities. Herein lies the secret of the widespread influence of the movement—an influence which although it has been most profound within the bounds of the Roman communion has yet extended in some measure to German Lutherans, French and Scottish Calvinists and others scarcely less remote from Old Rome. The movement is inextricably bound up with the return, now manifest in many different quarters, to a truly theological approach to biblical exegesis, and a recovered awareness that the ancient fathers are not so dead as some would have them be. 788

Dom Olivier Rousseau (whose *Histoire du Mouvement liturgique* affords an admirable survey of the origins and later development of the movement throughout western Christendom) has justly observed that so far as the Orthodox Church is concerned there can be no question of a liturgical movement, for her piety has never deviated from her worship.

I have already had occasion to refer to certain reforming tendencies which are exercising a growing influence upon the liturgical life of the Greek Church at the present time. Father Eusebius Matthopoulos never wearied of expounding the significance of the divine liturgy to the multitudes who flocked to hear him in every city of Old Greece, and one of the primary aims of the Brotherhood which this great preacher and evangelist founded at the beginning of the present century has always been the reverent celebration of the holy mysteries. One has but to compare the manner in which the holy eucharist is celebrated at the Metropolis in Athens, or the little chapel dedicated to St. Catherine above the outer harbour at the Piraeus, with the use which still obtains in the average Macedonian village church, to realise something of the progress that has been made within a generation. 788 178 [794]

While, however, one may in a certain sense speak of a liturgical movement within the Greek Church to-day, it is important to recognise how restricted is its scope when compared with recent developments

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NEW WINE AND OLD BOTTLES

As of Orthodox Christendom in general, so of the Church of Greece in particular, it may be said that the monastic life has been of quite unique importance in shaping her life and piety. This is no less true of the long centuries of the captivity than of the earlier and more formative ages of her history. Even to-day, when the monasteries are subject to widespread criticism, the ancient traditions of monastic spirituality persist and sometimes reveal themselves most unmistakably in precisely those circles where hostility toward the existing institutions—especially in their more idiorrhythmic forms—is most evident and outspoken. It needs to be remembered that the first stirrings of the new missionary spirit, which has had so notable an effect upon the Greek Church within the space of the last 100 years, centre upon the great monastery of Megaspelaion in the Peloponnese, and that Eusebius Matthopoulos, the founder of the Brotherhood of Life, was himself a monk of this convent, steeped in the ascetic traditions of his Church.

"There is no place where the *Greek* Religion is professed", says Rycaut, "so famous for Monasteries as that of Mount *Athos*; and indeed if we consider the number of them, and of the Religious belonging thereunto, it is not to be parallel'd in all the world . . . the grand Conservatory of the Christian Religion in *Greece*, and ancient austerity of living, and therefore not unaptly stiled by them *Ἅγιον ὄρος*, or the *Holy Mountain* . . . the high Pique or Peer whereof . . . is uneven, craggy, and as horrid as Caucasus."

Athos remains, after more than 1,000 years, the heart of Greek monasticism. Isolated and aloof, the life of the holy mountain moves to a slow rhythm which is as little susceptible of change or alteration as the constant surge of the waters about the rocky promontory, in whose narrow clefts and ledges the anchorites roost like wild sea fowl. In Greece one can never wholly escape from the all-pervading influence of Athos. One is always dimly aware of the holy mountain, brooding over the dark waters of the Aegean, its head wrapped in the clouds. At the very heart of fashionable Athens one may encounter a student-deacon from the *sketai* of St. Anne, or a stately *epitropos* in silken gown bound for the offices of the Holy Synod.

Thanks to its isolation, Athos suffered comparatively little from the ravages of war—though many monks endured imprisonment and ill-treatment, and considerable damage was done to monastic properties scattered about the mainland of northern Greece. The Communist revolution in Russia and the subsequent division of Europe into two

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many of whom are outspoken critics of the monks. Everywhere the demand is for *activity* (in the western sense of that word): for training preachers, confessors and catechists, and for raising the standards of clerical education. The monks are looked upon as idle drones who make no contribution to the life of the whole body. Inevitably, such views (which are widespread to-day) have had a marked effect upon monastic recruitment, and postulants are but few. All over Greece the monasteries lie abandoned and falling into ruin; rambling buildings in remote mountain sites visited only by shepherds, or inhabited by a solitary *kalogeros*, more farmer than monk, tending his vineyards and his olive groves and watching over his flocks and herds.

It would, nevertheless, be rash to assert that the new movements which have sprung up and taken root within the last two generations are anti-monastic in character, however hostile they may seem to be towards the traditional forms of the monastic life. It is tempting to compare a society such as the Brotherhood of Theologians, Zoë, for example, to the friars who made their appearance in western Europe more than seven centuries ago and who were frequently no more sympathetic towards the old monasticism than is the Greek theologian of the present time. I shall have occasion to describe this brotherhood in some detail in a later chapter; here I would but remind my reader of the fact that its founder was himself a monk of Megaspelaion, grounded in the traditional observance of that monastery, and that its members (though they do not bind themselves by permanent vows) are celibate priests or laymen, living under a common rule. Despite its novel constitution and organisation the movement retains much of the spirit of the old asceticism, and, in some respects at least, has more of the nature of a reassertion of the fundamental demands of the ascetic life in a form appropriate to the needs of the present time than a denial of their abiding value.

Soon after my arrival in Salonica in 1948, I was warned of the errors of the Zoë brothers and their sympathisers by a *very* idiorrhythmic monk, who assured me that these unhappy innovators were seeking to persuade men that the path that led to salvation was strait and the gateway narrow: such language seemed to have a familiar ring!

If we confine our view to the relics of the old monasticism it must be confessed that the prospect for the future is melancholy in the extreme. Everywhere the old order is passing away; amidst the crumbling walls a few survivors linger on as aliens in an unfamiliar world. But what of

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the new wine that is to be found in abundance within the religious societies? Is a new monasticism seeking forms appropriate to a changed environment? It is too early as yet to speak with any confidence, and yet there are signs that out of the present ferment may come something not so very far removed from the traditional patterns of the ascetic life.

Assuredly the passion for activity will have an end. It is but one aspect of that fascination which the feverish culture of the west holds for the modern Greek. Even now there are close personal links between the Zoë Brotherhood and certain convents in Old Greece and the islands where the ancient warfare is still waged with something of its first fiery ardour, and these may well prove to be of great importance for the future of Greek monasticism. We may be certain that the apostolic zeal and devotion which is so abundantly manifest within the religious societies will in time bring about a new awakening to the continuing need for men and women who will give themselves wholly to prayer. Then, indeed, we may hope to see a widespread revival of the monastic life that will people the ancient convents which now lie desolate and abandoned, and bring again the anchorites to the barren heights of Staghi.

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IX

A DAY OF WASTENESS AND DESOLATION 000

> It is not enough to understand the extremity of the affliction that has been endured, although if this is not understood, nothing has been understood.
>
> F. A. VOIGT
> *The Greek Sedition*

SINCE a measure of security was restored to Greece, the ecclesiastical authorities have had little respite from urgent practical problems clamouring for solution. To the most cursory reader of a periodical such as *Ekklesia* (the official journal of the Greek Church), it must have been apparent that during the years which followed the collapse of the Communist sedition the bishops were constantly preoccupied with questions of material welfare and relief. Scarcely an issue but contained some reference to the resettlement of refugees, plans for the rebuilding of destroyed churches or the provision of clothing for the clergy; while the *Paidoupolis*, the *Paidikos Stathmos* and the P.I.K.P.A. clinic and food-distribution centre had, it would seem, become permanent features of the diocesan organisation in many parts of Greece.

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It would, nevertheless, be a mistake to assume that the Church of Greece was forced by her preoccupation with these overwhelming material needs to neglect what must always be her primary task. Quite the contrary is true. That concern for the poor, the prisoners, the homeless and the oppressed which one looks for in a Church which pays peculiar reverence to St. John Chrysostom, went hand in hand with a missionary activity which, all else apart, would have sufficed to make the decade from 1940 to 1950 a memorable one in the annals of the Greek Church. Greece, as a theologian of the Zoë Brotherhood wrote to me in 1949, "issued from the war completely ruined—materially. Nothing was left to her of her national wealth. Her houses, villages, fields, factories, communications, and economy were all utterly destroyed. Spiritually, nevertheless, she emerged from the chaos of war reborn."

It is only against this background of suffering and devastation, of

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727 foreign occupation and armed sedition, that it is possible to grasp the
794 full significance of the spiritual ferment which marked these ten years, or to understand the magnitude of the task which the Church faces at the present time. For this reason I make no apology for dwelling at some length on the extent of the all-engulfing catastrophe which overwhelmed the Greek nation from the time of the Italian invasion of 1940 down to the decisive defeat of the Communists in the campaigns of 1949.

722 Much has already been written concerning the sufferings of the
727 people of Greece during these terrible years: about the horrors of the occupation, the burning and pillage of undefended villages, the famine which carried off more than 300,000 men, women and children, and the multitude of the homeless approaching in number the population of Athens and the Piraeus. Long before the end of the struggle with the Communists was in sight the destruction had become so manifest, so universal, that after a time one no longer marvelled. One came to accept the long lines of shattered rolling-stock stretching westwards from the walls of Salonica across the plain towards the muddy waters of the Vardar; the rusting carriages which lay strewn around the fair shores of Salamis. It was impossible to travel for any distance without encountering a dynamited bridge, a recently filled mine-crater, or the blackened ruins of an abandoned village. Every town of northern Greece was crowded with refugees, and even the suburbs of Salonica were liable to nocturnal bombardment.

722 Little attention, however, has as yet been given to the effect of ten
727 years of all but unbroken warfare upon the life of the Church: to the
795 breakdown of normal parochial organisation over large tracts of country
[793] for two or three years at a stretch, in consequence of the flight of the clergy together with their people from the villages; to the slaughter of the country parsons, and the destruction and looting of countless churches and monasteries which were to create such insuperable problems when the time came for the refugees to return to their homes; to the fate of those dioceses which were occupied by the Bulgars, who attempted to eradicate every trace of 'Hellenism' from those areas of eastern Macedonia and Thrace which fell to their lot; where the Greek bishops and their clergy were supplanted by Bulgars, the Greek service-books burned; where the very saints were de-Hellenised and had their names repainted in Slavonic characters. All who were able to do so fled from this region and took refuge in Salonica or in other towns to the west of the river Strymon, though some 40,000 were massacred. In the

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727 795 By the summer of 1950 it had become possible to gain some notion of the full extent of the material destruction which the Church had sustained since the beginning of the war; although with large tracts of northern Greece uninhabited until a few months before, the compiling of accurate statistics—never a simple matter—presented problems such as only one who had been in Greece during the last few years could hope to appreciate fully. I have already referred to the wholesale destruction of churches and monasteries. This, though serious enough, was perhaps most easily remedied. I remember one bishop who chuckled inordinately when I questioned him on this subject; "All that is necessary", he assured me, "is that I should go in person to the village with a spade and set to work, and then: *Panaghia*! in no time at all the whole village will turn out and a new church will be built before one can say a *kathisma* of psalms!"

More serious, perhaps, and not confined to those villages where the fabric of the church had been demolished, was the acute shortage of liturgical books, chalices, vestments, and other accessories of worship which could not be supplied from local resources. The dearth of [213] service-books, in particular, was occasioning widespread difficulty. Old Venetian editions had been brought in from long-abandoned monasteries and remote hill-top chapels which had escaped pillage—though the antique characters in which many of them were printed, while intelligible enough to the experienced monk, made it difficult for the average *papas* (to say nothing of the village choir) to read the service with any facility.

727 793 346 I remarked in an earlier chapter that the metropolis is as a rule one of the most impressive and substantial buildings of a provincial town. In 1950, however, several bishops were homeless. The Metropolitan of Grevena was living in lodgings, having one room for his personal use and another which served as the diocesan office; the Lord Agathangellos of Nevrokopi was living in the most apostolic simplicity in two barely furnished rooms; nor, amongst the provincial 'saints', were such cases exceptional.

727 794 Faced by a catastrophe so complete and overwhelming, the first concern of the Church was to try to meet the urgent demand for the bare necessities of life: for food, clothing and shelter. Everywhere the response was the same: orphanages, homes for refugee children, centres for the distribution of food and clothing, clinics and hospitals, were

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created as it were out of nothing. Everywhere these institutions were hastily improvised in the face of desperate and clamorous necessity, and, more often than not, maintained with a heroic disregard for the universal lack of material resources, and a courage worthy of a St. Vincent de Paul.

In almost every diocese the bishop bore a heavy responsibility in this work of relief. Nearly always he exercised a close personal supervision over the various institutions which had come into being in response to the need of a people driven, for the second time within less than ten years, from their homes and lands; over the *estia* where for several years milk was distributed daily to thousands of refugee children; the *paidikos stathmos* where infants were cared for during the day; the distribution of clothing, black stuff for cassocks, soap, cocoa, macaroni, beans, sugar, boots and shoes—all the multiplicity of urgently needed supplies with which a host of relief organisations, societies, British and American towns and villages, and private benefactors sought to succour the people of Greece in their distress.

At Siderokastro, for example, the Metropolitan (who as assistant bishop of Salonica was an ardent supporter of the work of the Near East Foundation during the period between the wars), founded a small hospital where poor families could receive free medical attention, as well as a remarkable school of housekeeping for girls of marriageable age. Like all the Macedonian 'despots', the Bishop was president of the local branch of the national relief organisation known as P.I.K.P.A., and supervised the two centres from which milk and cocoa were issued daily to thousands of refugee children from the villages of his diocese.

At Edessa, in western Macedonia, the Metropolitan founded, shortly after the end of the occupation, an orphanage for twenty-five boys. This was originally situated in a house on the outskirts of the town, but during the heavy fighting at Epiphany, 1949—when Naoussa, a few kilometres to the southward, was sacked by the Communists and more than 600 of its inhabitants carried away captive to the mountains —this building was extensively damaged and rendered almost uninhabitable. The Bishop then established his orphans under the care of a monk in a dilapidated Turkish house next to the metropolis, and this was subsequently transformed into a permanent orphanage. Not content with this, the Bishop proceeded to found two further orphanages attached to nearby monasteries, as soon as the district was sufficiently tranquil

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to permit the monks and nuns—who had taken refuge in the town of Edessa—to return to their respective convents. A fourth orphanage was established a few miles away at Iannitsa.'

So, all over Greece, there was heroic improvisation in the face of overwhelming material need; and, as at Edessa and Siderokastro, so in many another provincial town from the Peloponnese to the remotest fringes of northern Epirus and Thrace, the courage and initiative of the local 'despot' were factors of incalculable importance.

And yet, as I emphasised at the beginning of this chapter, preoccupation with the material needs of her children did not cause the Church to neglect their spiritual welfare. The feeding and clothing of the homeless and the destitute, the distribution of soup and the creation of hospitals and orphanages, went hand in hand with the preaching of the Gospel. The Metropolitan of Siderokastro was not content with his hospital, his P.I.K.P.A. centres and his school of housekeeping. Even while the issue of the long struggle with the Communists was yet in the balance—and the Bulgarian frontier lies barely ten miles to the northward of the town—the Lord Basil was organising his "Guardians of Spiritual Enlightenment" and pressing ahead with the construction of a *Christianiki Estia*: a building comprising a large hall, library, class-rooms and offices, which should serve as a centre for the already vigorous Christian youth movements of the diocese and for training catechists and preachers. He needed, as every bishop did, cassocks for his clergy, food and clothing and medical supplies for his stricken people; but he was anxious above all to obtain Greek New Testaments for his catechetical schools, and a duplicator which would enable him to send a weekly sermon to every village *papas* in the diocese.

So it was elsewhere. Nothing that I saw in Greece impressed me more deeply than the fact that it was so often in precisely those districts where suffering had been most acute, where destruction and devastation were most evident, that the life of the Church seemed to burn most brightly. Suffering and desolation, which in a people less profoundly Christian than the Greeks might have brought forth nothing more creative than despair, have in Greece borne precious fruit. Deprived of all worldly security and riches, the Church has been forced back upon the Rock whereon she is founded; has learned anew that there can be no resurrection apart from the cross—the instrument of shameful death which is yet the throne of the victor. Through prolonged suffering she has

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inevitably elapse before the Bishop could hope to be in a position to make a detailed statement. He instructed his secretary to provide me with a report embodying such information as had reached him. Grevena itself had suffered a heavy bombardment during the retreat of 1941 and the cathedral church of the Annunciation had been seriously damaged (the old cathedral of St. George had been destroyed by fire several years earlier). On the outskirts of the town lay a little church dedicated to St. Archelaos of Larissa. This had become the parish church of the refugees. Here, from 1947 onwards, the refugee clergy had assembled daily to sing mattins and evensong, and on Sundays and festivals to celebrate together the divine mysteries. This church, as I subsequently discovered, also served as a centre for the distribution of rations to the vast multitude of the homeless who dwelt in the nissen huts on the edge of the town. On my way back to the metropolis I ran into a large group of refugee clergy. They had got wind of my projected expedition and begged me to visit their villages and to bring back news of their condition after three years' abandonment.

I returned to the regimental headquarters at dusk, armed with my report, and spent an hour poring over maps with a young captain from Volos. We finally decided upon two itineraries, each of several days' duration. The first would enable me to see something of those parts of the diocese which were still uninhabited, and about which the Bishop had little information; the second, to visit several villages north and west of Grevena to which the refugees had lately returned. Arrangements having been made for a nine o'clock start the following morning, I returned to the metropolis for supper and discussed the Zoë movement and the architectural projects of the Metropolitan of Siatista with the Lord Theokletos until it was time for bed.

Saturday, February 4th, dawned fine and dry. The first stage of my journey was accomplished in a jeep driven by an *Epeirotes* who had concealed two British soldiers in his house at Iannina during the occupation. Less than five miles from Grevena the track which we were following gave up the ghost and further progress was impossible. At this point we were met by a sergeant and two soldiers, mounted on mules and leading a handsome bay mare caparisoned after the European manner. It took us an hour to climb to the village of Mavranaioi, which was strongly garrisoned (it had been partly inhabited since the previous October). After lunching with the officers of the garrison I resumed

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windows had been blocked with masonry and stones, and the church, thus barricaded and surrounded by an elaborate system of trenches, pill-boxes and barbed wire defences, transformed into a citadel. Here the greater part of the population had taken refuge while the militia, with a stiffening of gendarmerie, had fought off an assault on the village which raged for a night and a day on May 8th-9th, 1948. The fabric had suffered extensive damage from mortar and machine-gun fire, but the Communists had eventually been driven off. Earlier, the village had suffered grievously at the hands of the Germans. Though the church had been spared, the school and a large proportion of the houses had been destroyed. The school was now flourishing in a large nissen hut: formerly it had been housed in the nave of the church.

On Sunday morning there was great scrubbing and polishing of muddy boots, and at half-past eight I ventured forth, looking as spruce as three weeks of sleeping in my clothes would permit, in company with the *proedros*. The latter was anxious not to be too early at church, and, since the second bell had not yet sounded, we went first to inspect the new school. After smoking a cigarette with the *didaskalos* we proceeded to the church at the third bell, followed by all the children of the village. When the liturgy was ended the president climbed with great dignity to the top of one of the pill-boxes and made an impassioned oration welcoming the representative of Greece's great and traditional ally to their gallant and Christ-loving village, and dwelling at some length on the ties which, despite the infernal machinations of the Accursed of God, would surely bind together for all ages the Hellenic and British nations. The said representative thereupon made a brief, but it is to be hoped fitting, reply to this masterpiece of presidential rhetoric, and the whole company drifted away in high good humour to sip cognac and discuss the latest news which had arrived from Kozani.

After a visit to the family of a young theologian from Salonica I went to feast, first with the president and then—at the dictates of charity rather than of appetite—with the parish priest also. The influence of the Kozani seminary had made itself felt in this village, and the catechetical school was in full swing as I passed the new school-house on my way to the parsonage. There the wine that makes glad the heart of man flowed freely, and it was a drowsy traveller who rode across the hills to the neighbouring village of Kivotos later that afternoon. Communications having proved unreliable, I was constrained to accept the hospitality of one of the churchwardens. Shortly before noon the

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A MACEDONIAN DIOCESE

following day I rode into Vatolakkos with an escort of six militiamen and fell straight into the hands of the parish priest, who was sunning himself on a bench outside the gendarmerie station. This *papas* was a graduate of the Kozani seminary; his father had been a priest in Smyrna (like Kivotos, this was a refugee village). He spoke with pride of the catechetical school which had been flourishing in the village since the previous autumn.

Vatolakkos, like Aghios Georgios, had never been abandoned by its inhabitants. Owing to its important position—astride the main road from Grevena to Kozani—it had been strongly garrisoned throughout the troubles, and had offered sanctuary to the fugitives from no less than ten neighbouring communities, despite the fact that the greater number of the houses had been destroyed in the German advance of 1941—there were bomb craters all along the road from Kivotos southward. The parish priest had sheltered five refugee families in his house for more than two years. The church, which had never been completed, had, according to the Bishop's report, been pillaged by the Germans. It had moreover been damaged by mortar fire during an attack on the village by the Communists. A new school had just been opened to take the place of the one destroyed by the Germans.

From Vatolakkos I succeeded in telephoning to army headquarters at Grevena, and shortly after three o'clock I was picked up by my friend from Iannina. After attending the evensong of the refugee clergy, in company with the Bishop's deacon, and a long talk with the fugitive *ephemerioi* of Spelaion and Kosmati, I paid a final visit to the metropolis. The Bishop was unwell: he had been ill for some time past, and I took my leave early. Some months later, after a letter enclosing photographs of the ruined churches of the diocese had remained long unanswered, I saw from a notice in *Ekklesia* that the Lord Theokletos had passed to his rest.

Like Father Ioakeim, his deacon, he was a native of the Piraeus and had laboured there for thirty-three years as vicar of the parish of St. Constantine before being called to take charge of the see of Grevena in the third year of the occupation. The state of the diocese even in those days was serious enough, and had the new *despotes* been able to foresee the full extent of the catastrophe which was to overwhelm the widely scattered communities committed to his charge within the space of another five years, he might understandably have shrunk from the heavy burden of responsibility that he was called to bear.

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793 722 From 1947 onwards the Lord Theokletos found himself the bishop of a vast multitude of displaced persons; the whole outward framework of diocesan administration disrupted; his parish clergy driven from their cures and scattered to far corners of Greece, or crowded together in the nissen huts on the margins of Grevena; the town itself threatened by the Communists. Called to face a truly desperate situation, the Metropolitan set an example worthy of his predecessor, the martyred Aimilianos, and of the great traditions of the Greek Church. Somehow, despite all material difficulties, food, shelter and clothing were provided for the innumerable refugees who descended upon Grevena during the fourth year of his episcopate, the philanthropic institutions of the battered township continued to function, and the Saint and Despot of Grevena, at the head of his 'sacred company' of refugee clergy, showed that the spirit of the warrior-prelates of the old wars was not yet extinct.

793 794 This alone was sufficient to ensure that the episcopate of the Metropolitan Theokletos of Grevena would long be remembered, not merely in western Macedonia but throughout the Church of Greece. But this was not all. I have said that it was often in those districts where devastation and suffering had left their deepest mark that the Church manifested most plainly the Source of her life. The episcopate of Theokletos of Grevena may well serve to illustrate this truth.

The late Metropolitan had not been long in residence (he had been forced to spend some months in Kozani before coming to his diocese) before he summoned to his assistance a priest-monk then working in Florina, the Archimandrite Augustine: a powerful preacher, an ardent evangelist noted for his adherence to the letter of the dominical counsels in such matters as personal property, and an outspoken rebuker of vice —even when manifested in high places. This last characteristic having apparently rendered Father Augustine's relations with a certain dignitary of the Church somewhat delicate, he established himself at Grevena during the third year of the Lord Theokletos' episcopate and threw himself into the task of building up a Christian movement among the young men and girls of the diocese.

Father Augustine's method was to gather round him a little band of potential leaders: a score of young catechists of both sexes, the majority drawn from the senior classes of the high school, who would in time be able to carry on the work which he had begun. Before long it had proved possible to organise catechetical schools for children of all ages, and (as the refugee camp became more and more swollen

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during the course of 1947) to draw into the new Christian Unions many hundreds of boys and girls from the remote hamlets of Pindos, few of whom had ever heard a sermon preached in their village churches, let alone received any systematic course of instruction in the faith such as was now offered them. Whilst the whole diocese lay desolate and the Communist bands roamed the mountains almost at will, there was slowly growing up amongst the young Christians crowded together in the mud and squalor of Grevena a movement which promised to transform the religious life of this barren region.

In 1949 Father Augustine left Grevena to take up new work as chaplain to the 2nd Army Corps at Kozani, but the Christian Unions continued to flourish. Their membership at the time of my visit was in the region of 1,600—and this figure did not include the hundreds of children who had recently returned to their villages. In order that these latter should not be lost to the movement, several young catechists were visiting the lately repopulated villages around Grevena every week-end, giving addresses either during the liturgy or else in the village square when the people came out of church, and labouring to build up catechetical schools in every village. The Metropolitan had given immense stimulus to this work by sending as many parish clergy as he could spare to study at Kozani seminary—men like Papa Athanasius from Rodia—who would be qualified to run their own catechetical schools when they returned home.

Outstanding among the catechists trained by Father Augustine was a young gendarme who, now that there was no regular *hierokeryx* attached to the metropolis, was himself acting as the diocesan preacher and assistant to the Metropolitan. It would have been hard to match the burning devotion and zeal of these young catechists; the enthusiasm and eagerness of their still younger pupils. The Bishop himself had no illusions as to the importance of the work that had been begun three years before: in the face of devastation such as I had seen with my own eyes during the course of the ten days I had spent in the diocese—material destruction on a scale equal to that sustained by any Greek diocese—it was his considered opinion that the most desperate need was not for clothing or food or medical supplies, not for animals to replace those slaughtered by the Germans or driven off to the mountains by the Communists, not for domestic or agricultural implements and tools, but for a properly equipped building to serve as a centre for the Christian Unions, for Greek New Testaments and other Christian

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794 [793] [727] literature, and for a magical *polygraphos* which would enable him to distribute every week a homily to be read by every *papas* in the diocese at the Sunday liturgy.

For the truly notable feature of his episcopate had been neither the destruction and pillage of the villages, nor the slaughter of his clergy and the flight of his people from their homes and lands; all this had but provided the setting for a flowering of new and vigorous spiritual life of untold power, which promised to spread, from the little band of catechists whom Father Augustine had gathered about him, to every village and hamlet of the diocese—to Spelaion, high amongst the towering rocks above the Venetikos, where the saints brooded over the dark church, to Samarina and the summer pastures of the Vlach shepherds, southward and westward to desolate Trikomon and the uninhabited wastes towards Metsovo—and to bring a deepened and more conscious sharing in the Christian mystery to a people who had, as it was, retained their hold upon the fundamental virtues of faith, hope and charity with a tenacity which is rare in the world to-day.

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XI

THE FIRST STIRRINGS OF REVIVAL

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> The people have indeed a lively sense of religion in their hearts, but because they have neither guides nor preachers, nor pastors to lead them to the saving and life-giving truth, they are sleeping the sleep of apathy and spiritual death.
>
> Letter of FATHER EUSEBIUS MATTHOPOULOS, dated 1879

> We live in an Age that hath more need of good examples than precepts.
>
> GEORGE HERBERT

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I HAVE dwelt at some length upon the recent history of a single Macedonian diocese, for the *eparchia* of Grevena was as it were a microcosm of the Greek Church as a whole; the essential features of its history during the previous decade were writ large from the Peloponnese to the northern frontiers of the kingdom. It was not only amongst the overcrowded refugee *kalyvai* of Grevena that there sprang up within these last few years a flowering of evangelical Christianity such as tempted one to prophesy that the day might not be far distant when the Church of Greece—poor and naked though she were in the world's eyes—would again become a lamp whose bright beams would extend to every corner of Christendom.

This widespread kindling of the smouldering embers of the Church's life shone out the more brightly by reason of the unrelieved blackness of its setting. We must not on this account forget the all-important, though less spectacular, work of preparation that had been going on for a century and more. The remarkable developments of the last few years would have been unthinkable were it not for the devoted labours of all those who had worked and prayed for the quickening of this ancient Church during the course of three or four generations.

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We do not lack abundant testimony to the wretched condition of the Church of Greece during the first half of the nineteenth century.

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795 797 Though the traditions which enshrine the saving truths of the Gospel had been handed down from generation to generation throughout the centuries of Turkish dominion, the life of the Church was nevertheless gravely threatened by corruption and decay. The ministry of the word had fallen into almost complete neglect even in Athens, while in the country districts sermons were all but unknown. The ordinary people were for the most part "ill instructed, or rather not taught at all, sermons and catechising rare amongst them, Masses and Divine Service hudled and run over in a cursory and negligent manner . . ."

793 797 The higher clergy, with few exceptions, paid but scanty heed to their pastoral responsibilities. By the eighteen-forties (owing to the long delay in the recognition of the autocephalous status of the Church of Greece by the Oecumenical Patriarch) the number of the bishops had declined until only four remained, and those well advanced in years. As to the parish clergy, one may read accounts of their ignorance that differ but little from those which Covel had set down 200 years earlier: "Most priests have no books by them, but only their Church Offices; and . . . all their Study is only to get them by Heart, which takes up so much of their time as they cannot attend to read or Study other learned books if they had them. . . . Their ordinary prayers and liturgies, like Parrots they commonly mumble and hurry over by heart, and use them very imperfectly, with strange variety and confusion."

[792] As for the monasteries, though there remained many holy monks and learned even in the darkest days, all too many of the *kalogeroi* were worldly and ignorant; jealous of their privileges, content with a merely formal discharge of the duties belonging to their state; drowsing in sunny galleries, cultivating their vegetables and their pleasant vineyards.

794 797 It is against such a background that we have to view the labours of that little company of priests and laymen who laid the foundations of what, in our own time, has become a nation-wide movement. The initiative in the growing revival of evangelistic and missionary activity that has characterised the last 100 years of the history of the Greek Church has come, not from the hierarchy—though many bishops have been whole-hearted supporters of the new movements—but from individual churchmen: lay theologians, monks and clergy. It is only very recently that an official 'Home Mission' has come into being, with the foundation of the *Apostoliki Diakonia* of the Church of Greece (not to be confounded with a far older movement of the same name which still flourishes in Salonica and the northern dioceses).

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797 175 the temptation to mingle the pure milk of the Gospel with denunciation of current abuses; but, in spite of his restraint, he was imprisoned for several months at the time of Phlamiatos' arrest and was afterwards confined to his monastery. He remained at Megaspelaion for twelve years, and, despite the curtailment of his missionary journeys, continued to exercise a most effectual ministry through correspondence; while, as the fame of his holiness and wisdom went abroad, there came to the monastery a constant stream of visitors. Father Ignatius continued to preach and to hear confessions, and at last, when H.M.S. *Scylla* had borne away to Venice the unfortunate Otho and his consort, he was free once more to resume his itinerant work. The story of the last seven years of his life is a record of strenuous missionary activity amongst the towns and villages of the Peloponnese. His work received the blessing of the hierarchy, and he gathered about him a little group of disciples which included both clergy and laymen, prominent amongst them the deacon Hierotheos Metropoulos, uncle of Eusebius Matthopoulos, himself a monk of Megaspelaion and a future Archbishop of Patras. In 1866 Father Ignatius declined the offer of the bishopric of Triphylia on the plea of ill-health, and three years later he died.

The life of this zealous monk had already exercised a most potent influence throughout the Peloponnese, and through the little company of disciples that gathered about him at Megaspelaion his labours were destined to bear fruit over a far wider field than that covered by his own missionary journeys. Until the advent of Cosmas Phlamiatos there had been but little preaching in the towns and villages of Old Greece, and the labours of this lay theologian had inaugurated a new era of missionary activity.

797 • 794 175 The pattern of the first phase of the revival—from the arrival in the Peloponnese of Phlamiatos down to the death of Father Ignatius—bears a curious resemblance to that of the period which ensues, and which culminates in the foundation of the Brotherhood of Theologians, Zōe. Again the original stimulus is provided by a layman whose effective ministry is terminated by a clash with authority, and again a monk of Megaspelaion is left to build upon another's foundation and to consolidate his work.

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In 1866, three years before the death of Ignatius Lambropoulos,

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there came to Athens a certain Apostolos Makrakes, a lay philosopher from the Cyclades, who had studied in Constantinople and in Paris, and had already won a considerable renown through his writings against the Franks and on the true nature of the Church. Makrakes electrified the Athenians by his preaching in Omonoia Square and other public places in the city. To all who heard this Christian philosopher it was evident that a new spirit was abroad in Greece. Shortly before the death of Father Ignatius, Makrakes visited Megaspelaion and there encountered a young monk from Melissopetra named Eusebius Matthopoulos. This meeting marks the beginning of a long association between the two men which, clouded though it was by the eccentricities of the layman's later years, was to prove of incalculable importance for the Greek Church.

Father Eusebius (who, with Apostolos Makrakes, dominates the history of the revival of missionary activity for the next half-century and more) seems to have been set apart for the monastic life almost from his cradle. Despite recurrent bouts of fever (which left him with a thorn in his flesh for the remainder of a long life of strenuous activity), his uncle, Hierotheos Metropoulos, secured his admission to his own convent at the age of fourteen, and during the next few years he became the closest and most ardent disciple of Father Ignatius. It was he who took up the mantle of the great preacher and confessor at the latter's death.

Early in the 'seventies we find Eusebius Matthopoulos (now a deacon) studying the holy scriptures and the ancient philosophers and divines in the Athens schools, and already launched upon his long and most fruitful ministry as a *hierokeryx*. The year 1876 is memorable for two events: the ordination of Father Eusebius to the priesthood, and the foundation of the School of the Logos.

Hitherto the missionary revival inaugurated by the preaching of Phlamiatos had been quite unorganised. Though the monastery of Megaspelaion had afforded a base for the labours of Ignatius Lambropoulos and his fellow workers, there had been no question of any formal association or 'movement'. These itinerant preachers and confessors had but restored and extended that "pious and laudable institution" (so Dr. Covel) whereby certain monkish theologians—"Grave and Reverend Persons that had been bred up in their Monasteries to a strict and mortified life"—would be appointed by the bishops "to go to their respective Cities and Towns . . . to advise, direct and assist all

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good People . . . for the encouraging and encreasing of their Devotion, and for the better management of their Lives and Conversations". The foundation of the School of the Logos constitutes an important landmark; it inaugurates the era of the voluntary movements and establishes the essential features of a pattern of missionary activity which has held the field until our own day, and from which the foundation of an official Home Mission marks the first radical departure.

In September, 1876, Makrakes and his associates founded the School of the Logos which combined the functions of a private *gymnasium* with those of an evening school for adults. Father Eusebius (who had been ordained priest a month before) was appointed chaplain and *pneumatikos* of this remarkable institution—he also made himself responsible for the cleaning of the school (especially, it is related, "of its vilest places", *τῶν εὐτελεστέρων τόπων αὐτῆς*: a phrase charged with sinister meaning for anyone acquainted with the lamentable decline in the standards of Hellenic plumbing since the far-off days when King Minos flourished in his Cretan palace!) The outstanding qualities of this young priest were quickly discerned by those about him, and not a few who were many years his senior in age and experience came to rely upon him as counsellor and spiritual father. It was during this period that Father Eusebius began his experiments with the small groups (*omades*) which were to become so important a feature of the brotherhood which he founded some thirty years later.

But the School of the Logos was not destined to enjoy a long career. Scarcely two years had elapsed from its foundation when Makrakes and his associates became involved in a violent controversy with the authorities, which brought their educational and spiritual work in Athens to an abrupt conclusion and scattered the leaders of the movement to remote islands and monasteries. In 1875, as the result of a scandalous transaction involving payments to certain ministers of the State, three men succeeded in obtaining the vacant bishoprics of Patras, Messenia and Kephallenia. The facts became widely known and public opinion was deeply aroused. Makrakes and certain of his fellow-workers published fiery articles denouncing this flagrant violation of the holy canons. A trial ensued; the guilty ministers were imprisoned and fined, while the three simoniacal bishops were committed to the Holy Synod, which should then, according to the canons, have proceeded to a sentence of deposition.

The Synod, however, declined to take this step. Makrakes thereupon

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extended his attacks from the simoniacal bishops themselves to those whom he now accused of being their accomplices—the members of the Holy Synod and the Archbishop of Athens. A bitter controversy ensued. Makrakes (whose language had never been characterised by moderation) threw discretion to the winds and attacked the bishops, the prime minister, the government and the theological faculty of the university without discrimination and in the most violent terms. The Metropolitan of Athens and of all Greece he denounced as "Simon Magus: *Archegos* of the hateful-to-God heresy and Metropolitan of evil courses!" The national university was no longer the *panepistemion*, the home of all the sciences, but the *panskotisterion*, the abode of universal darkness.

The clergy who were associated with Makrakes were more restrained in their denunciations of the hierarchy. They felt bound, nevertheless, to cease to commemorate their diocesan at the divine liturgy. The Synod retaliated by publishing unfounded charges of heresy and false teaching, and warned the faithful to have nothing to do with the theologians associated with the School of the Logos. The school itself was suppressed in the autumn of 1878, though Makrakes continued to publish his journal. In February, 1879, six of the 'Makrakist' clergy (including the archimandrites Hierotheos Metropoulos and Elias Vlachopoulos, as well as Father Eusebius) were brought before the Synod and tried on charges of heresy and *kakodoxia*. Despite the accused clergy's profession of orthodoxy and the absence of any shred of evidence in support of the charges, all were found guilty and sentenced to periods of exile, ranging from eight to ten years, in isolated monasteries dispersed amongst the islands of the Aegean and Ionian seas.

Father Eusebius was sent to the monastery of Palaiokastriotissa in Corfu—a small convent inhabited by ten monks, five hours' journey from the town of Kerkyra—where, cheerfully accepting this enforced interruption of his apostolic labours amongst the Athenians, he gave himself unreservedly to prayer and self-examination, and to the study of the scriptures. It was not long before the abbot of the monastery realised that the character of the exiled priest had been grossly misrepresented by the ecclesiastical authorities, and, with the consent of the local bishop, Father Eusebius began to preach in the villages of the diocese and to confess the people. Hierotheos Metropoulos was meanwhile turning his banishment to good account by reorganising the monastery of Longovardas in the isle of Paros, where his influence has endured to the present day.

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175 Patras during these years, and when his uncle died in 1902 there was a great and widespread desire that he should succeed him. On this occasion, however, as on every other, Father Eusebius declined all offers of ecclesiastical preferment. With the example of Hierotheos Metropoulos before his eyes he was in no danger of underestimating the influence that could be exercised by a bishop who was a saint in deed as well as in name; but he shrank from the heavy burden of administrative cares which would inevitably hinder the free exercise of that ministry of preaching and reconciliation to which God had called him.

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175 After the death of Hierotheos Metropoulos, Father Eusebius spent a further five years in missionary journeys to every part of liberated Greece, and then, in 1907, came the foundation of the Brotherhood of Theologians, Zoë: a society organised on monastic lines which should, if God so willed, serve as a fit instrument for the continued regeneration of the Greek Church and for the extension of the work begun nearly seventy years before by Cosmas Phlamiatos and Ignatius Lambropoulos. A small house in an Athens suburb served as the headquarters of the new brotherhood; and here Father Eusebius gathered about him a little group of young theologians consisting of two priests and two laymen.
[204] In 1911 they commenced the publication of the journal *Zoë*, which was destined before long to extend the teaching of the movement to every diocese of the newly-liberated provinces of northern Greece.

From these modest beginnings there has sprung a movement which in the course of a little more than a generation has exercised a most powerful influence upon the life of the Greek Church. Through the preaching of the Zoë brothers and the many-sided activity of the movements which have grown up under their supervision, the religious life of many a town and village has been transformed beyond all recognition since the days when Apostolos Makrakes first preached in the public places of Athens, and the youthful Eusebius Matthopoulos pondered the writings of the ancient divines and swept the classrooms and corridors of the School of the Logos.

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XII

THE BATTLE OF THE DEPTH

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Η ΜΑΧΗ ΤΟΥ ΒΑΘΟΥΣ ΔΙΑ ΤΗΝ ΝΙΚΗΝ ΤΟΥ ΠΛΑΤΟΥΣ

MOTTO OF THE APOSTOLIC DIACONATE OF THESSALONICA

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IT IS a good general rule in dealing with something that lies outside the experience of one's audience to attempt to describe it in terms of what is known and familiar. Father Michael Manousakes, Hierokeryx of the Sacred Metropolis of Drama, no doubt had some such maxim in mind when he introduced the present writer to an audience made up of members of his catechetical schools as "a *theologos* of the Oxford Movement: a movement which closely resembles out own Zoë Brotherhood". It must nevertheless be admitted that the compact, well-disciplined organisation into which the little brotherhood founded by Eusebius Matthopoulos in 1907 has since developed bears little apparent resemblance to the movement which was stirring in the Oriel S.C.R. during the eighteen-thirties.

The Brotherhood of Theologians, Zoë (to give the movement its proper title), now consists of some ninety men—all graduates, the great majority of the theological faculty of the University of Athens—about thirty of whom are in orders, the remainder laymen. The organisation of the brotherhood is monastic in character, though its members do not bind themselves by permanent vows and are at liberty to withdraw at any time. They must be unmarried—though a lay theologian who leaves the movement is free to marry—and property is held in common. The superior holds office for life (at the death of Father Eusebius in 1929 the Archimandrite Seraphim Papakostas was elected as his successor).

Seven priests and ten laymen were in the spring of 1959 resident in Athens, five other theologians in Salonica. At that time no less than twenty-seven members of the brotherhood (including seven priests) were serving as 'preachers' with the army, and another was acting as [701] [727]

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794 [701] [727] chaplain to the camp in Leros where boys who had fallen beneath the influence of the Communists were being given the opportunity to rediscover the fundamental loyalties within the setting of a Christian community. The remaining members of the brotherhood were dispersed amongst the dioceses of Greece, preaching, confessing the people, training young catechists and preachers, supervising seminaries for the country clergy, directing catechetical schools and youth movements: in these and many other ways building up the body of Christ in each village, town and diocese; seeking, above all, to follow in the steps of their founder by living in the power of the Holy Spirit that Christ might indeed be formed in them.

Every summer all the members of the brotherhood assemble for a period of retreat at Aghia Paraskevi (on the outskirts of Athens), and each is called upon to give an account of his labours during the previous year.

There can be little question that the most potent factor in the religious revival which has transformed the outward face of the Greek Church within the last 100 years has, under God, been the hidden life and apostolic labours of Eusebius Matthopoulos, and of the brotherhood he founded. The latter is still far the most important of the many missionary and evangelistic movements that have sprung up during the last two generations. The number and complexity of these movements is at first quite bewildering, and the visitor to Greece will need to spend a little time in Zoë circles before he can hope to avoid confounding *X.E.N.* with *X.E.E.N.*, or to be able to distinguish with assurance between the spheres of activity appropriate to *X.M.O.*, *X.O.N.*, *X.Φ.E.*, *X.E.E.* and *X.E.E.Λ.* respectively.

There are, on the one hand, all the movements more or less closely connected with the Zoë Brotherhood: some under the immediate supervision of the central organisation, others enjoying a measure of independence. On the other, there are several entirely separate movements which sprang up within the circle of clergy and laity who gathered about Apostolos Makrakes; and, finally, there are several vigorous organisations which have grown up in provincial centres such as Patras and Salonica and are still flourishing at the present time. A detailed account of all these movements would afford material for a substantial volume, and I propose to attempt no more within the limits of a single chapter than the most cursory description of their scope and general characteristics.

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I have already referred to the movement known as *Anaplasis*. This was founded as early as 1887 by two lay disciples of Apostolos Makrakes: it is to the latter that it owes its primary characteristics. Its efforts were mainly directed to resisting, by means of preaching, lectures, and the publication of apologetic and philosophical writings, the spread of materialistic notions derived from western Europe. It was from the start a predominantly lay movement widely supported by theologians, philosophers, lawyers and university professors, as well as by many merchants and business men. Its journal formerly had a wide circulation in professional and academic circles and was issued, at first weekly and then fortnightly, right down to 1941.

During the eighteen-nineties the Anaplasis movement supported ten preachers who worked in the Athens-Piraeus region and also to some extent in the provinces. The Crown Prince Constantine was an honorary president, and amongst its most active members were the lawyer, John Skaltsounes (who is looked upon in Greece as a forerunner of the *Aktines* movement), and a Minister of Justice, Nicolas Demetrakopoulos, who, though not himself a trained theologian, was one of the first persons to devote his attention seriously to Christian apologetics. The real leader of the movement, however, was the lawyer and *hierokeryx*, Michael Galanos, and its final eclipse coincided with his death in 1948.

Father Eusebius and his associates collaborated with this movement for many years as preachers and contributors to its journal. Then came the foundation of the Zoë Brotherhood and the growth of a separate movement with its own periodical, and from this time onward the older association declined. It lingered on for many years: Archbishop Chrysostom Papadopoulos gave it his vigorous support from 1922 to 1938 (his brother was for a time its director), and it was not until quite recently that it was finally swallowed up in newer movements like *Aktines*, the home mission society known as *Apostolos Paulos*, and *Enoria*.

The Anaplasis movement was admirably equipped to meet the rationalist influence at work in Athens during the latter part of the nineteenth century; it was not able to adapt itself to the needs of a changing situation—hence its decline. From this pioneer association, however, there sprang two other movements, both of which have exercised a considerable influence during recent years. Both, it is interesting to note, were founded by parish priests. One (which is now under the direction of Father Angelos Nissiotes) has developed until it is second only to Zoë amongst the unofficial movements in the scope

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175 and importance of its activity. The other was the creation of a remarkable parish priest, Father George Makres, who was for many years in charge of the parish of St. Basil in the Piraeus. He it was who in the year 1896 first established catechetical schools (there had been earlier but unsuccessful attempts), and both in this field and in that of the formation of 'circles' or groups for the study of the Bible he was a
[204] distinguished pioneer. He also edited a religious journal bearing the title of *Anamorphosis* (Transformation). After his death in 1943 his work in the Piraeus was taken up by one of his numerous spiritual sons, the then Archimandrite Damaskenos Kotzias (now raised to the episcopate).

The second of these movements was founded in 1913 by Father Mark Tsaktanes and grew up about his parish church of St. Catherine. Like Father George, in the Piraeus, this married priest led the way in the organisation of catechetical schools (some schools which still flourish in our own day are his foundations), and of circles for the study of the Bible. When he died, his brother-in-law, Father Angelos Nissiotes, the priest in charge of the parish of the Life-Giving Source in the heart of Athens, carried on and greatly extended his work. The 'Orthodox Christian Unions' and catechetical schools under Father Angelos' direction are now extremely vigorous, and out of this movement have come some of the most interesting experiments of recent years.

An admirable example of the older movements which have grown up in the provincial towns of Greece is that known as the '*Apostoliki Diakonia* of Salonica', founded in 1928 by a lay theologian with the primary object of promoting the study of the holy scriptures among adults. In addition to this side of its work it had founded by 1949 some thirty-one catechetical schools, with a total membership of nearly 3,000 boys and girls. The teachers in these schools included students and professional men. From this movement there has sprung since the end of the occupation a smaller organisation of great interest. This is
[874] the 'School of Christ', the creation of the Archimandrite Timothy Papamichael. Its primary object is the training of preachers and lay evangelists. This task has been tackled with such energy that already by 1950 there were more than 120 members of the movement—mostly young men and women—at work in Salonica and the north of Greece.

This unofficial 'Apostolic Diaconate' has led the way in the creation of catechetical schools and small groups for Bible study in the northern

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dioceses, for it was not until 1936 that the Zoë Brotherhood established a centre in Salonica. The motto of this movement (which I have quoted at the head of this chapter), provides a key to much of the most notable work that is being done in Greece to-day; 'the victory of the width'—to give a literal translation of a phrase that cannot easily be put into English—ultimately depends upon the faithfulness and energy with which 'the battle of the depth' is waged. There can, in other words, be no fruitful outward activity that does not spring from a deepened interior life. It is only as the missioner himself is truly converted, only as he himself learns to dwell in Christ and as Christ is formed in him, that he can be used as an effective instrument for the conversion of others. Apart from this all his activity is in vain:

"As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, except it abide in the vine; no more can ye, except ye abide in me. . . . If a man abide not in me, he is cast forth as a branch, and is withered; and men gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned."

It augurs well for the future that the strenuous missionary activity now being undertaken in almost every town and diocese of Greece is so completely grounded in prayer and the study of the scriptures, finding its centre in the divine liturgy and the sacraments. The foundations are being well laid.

The full scope of the activity of the unofficial religious movements is perhaps most conveniently described if we consider in turn the chief instruments now being employed to bring about the regeneration of the Greek people in Christ. These include preaching, the mystery of confession, the organisation of catechetical schools, youth movements and study circles, the publication of Christian literature, and, finally, liturgical reform.

Preaching has from the outset been of primary importance. Cosmas Phlamiatos, Apostolos Makrakes and Eusebius Matthopoulos all relied upon the spoken *kerygma* as their most effective instrument. The theologian—whether cleric or layman—who serves on the staff of a provincial bishop is first and foremost the *hierokeryx*, the sacred herald, whose duty it is to assist the bishop in the ministry of the word. In the course of the last two generations there has been a tremendous revival of preaching—at any rate in the towns. Every parish church in Athens and the Piraeus now has a sermon at the Sunday liturgy—normally an exposition of the Gospel which immediately precedes it—

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783 confessor amongst the Greeks than in the west. The power to bind and
793 to loose is given by the laying on of hands: the grace of the wise director of souls is conferred only upon a few, and is normally the fruit of great personal holiness and wide experience. Throughout Orthodox Christendom there has been a tendency to demand a high degree of perfection before authorising a priest to exercise the ministry of the confessor: one must oneself become a *spirituel* before aspiring to the office of a *père spirituel*.

The number of confessors at work in Greece to-day is still very small. In the country districts, in particular, this sacrament is still largely neglected. The ministry of the *pneumatikos* is nevertheless a factor of the very greatest importance in the present revival, and one which is held in the highest estimation, within the voluntary movements and the official Apostoliki Diakonia alike.

794 While preaching and the mystery of confession have thus been restored to something approaching their rightful place within the life of the Greek Church after long years of neglect, the leaders of the new movements have forged other weapons to meet the peculiar needs of the time. Chief amongst them must be mentioned the catechetical schools and Christian unions which are now so prominent a feature of Greek church life.

The creation of catechetical schools was essayed as early as the eighteen-seventies, but unsuccessfully, and it was the married priests George Makres and Mark Tsaktanes who were the real pioneers in this field. By the late 'twenties there were many catechetical schools flourishing in Athens and the Piraeus, especially under the direction of Father Angelos Nissiotes, who had taken over the movement founded by Father Mark at the latter's death in 1924. The Zoë Brotherhood (which had by this time emerged triumphant from two further attacks by suspicious hierarchs, and had also survived the premature death of one of the first and most ardent disciples of its founder, the Archimandrite Dionysios Pharazoules), first turned its attention to the organisation of catechetical schools in 1926. From this time onward these schools begin to establish themselves until at the present day Zoë alone has well over 600 under its supervision, and the movement of Father Angelos some 350, not to mention hundreds of others now flourishing in every part of Greece.

These schools (which are directed almost entirely by lay men and

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women) afford a systematic course of instruction in Christian doctrine and practice for boys and girls between the ages of nine and twenty-two. These children have all, it must be borne in mind, been full communicant members of the Church since infancy. There are no confirmation classes in Greece, and, within the new movements at least, the period of adolescence, when so overwhelming a proportion of our own children lose all vital contact with the Church, is commonly that at which the young Greek Christian begins to play an active part in the life of his local community.

The size of the catechetical schools, even in the provincial towns of northern Greece (where such schools were not founded until the late 'thirties and had hardly established themselves when these districts were overwhelmed by foreign occupation and Communist sedition) is often quite staggering. The figures for the town of Kilkis—a few miles north of Salonica and the scene of some of the bloodiest massacres of the whole war—may serve as an illustration. During the year 1948–49, when the war with the Communists was at its height, membership of the catechetical schools was as follows:

	Boys	*Girls*
Junior schools	782	696
Middle schools	165	180
Senior schools	55	77
Young workers	123	293
	1125	1246

These are the figures for a Macedonian market town whose pre-war population scarcely exceeded 7,000. Even allowing for the fact that several hundreds of the children belonging to the catechetical schools in 1948–49 were refugees from the villages of the diocese, they show the astonishing development of these new Christian schools within a bare ten or eleven years.

Remarkable as these figures may seem they are by no means exceptional. All over Greece catechetical schools have sprung up as it were overnight and multiplied with incredible rapidity, despite the lack of trained leaders. At Kilkis the metropolitan had the assistance of one priest-theologian. In the adjoining diocese of Siderokastro, where the bishop had only a seminary-trained preacher to help him, and where

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794 [162] [793] catechetical schools were in September, 1949, quite a recent innovation, membership of the schools, in a town considerably smaller than Kilkis, had already risen to 957 and was increasing rapidly. In and around Salonica the number of catechetical schools under the supervision of the Zoë Brotherhood rose from less than thirty in 1942 to 170 in 1949.

The catechetical school normally meets every Sunday, and the teaching is based on one of the two courses now in circulation—the first issued by the Zoë Brotherhood, the second (only recently published) by the official Home Mission. While the parallels with our own Sunday Schools and 'catechisms' are evident, these Greek schools have a character which is all their own. Particularly impressive is the stimulus which is given to the active apostolate of the laity. The children are from their earliest days encouraged to pull their weight in the life of the local *ekklesia*. At Verroia, in the spring of 1950, boys of nine were visiting the townsfolk and delivering letters from the *bierokeryx* of the metropolis. At Salonica, where the catechetical schools under the auspices of the Apostoliki Diakonia were normally directed by a student of the theological faculty of the university, the teacher would at the end of a lesson despatch his pupils, two by two, to call at the homes of any who through sickness or for some other cause had been unable to be present that day. When the defaulter was run to earth he would be given a brief *résumé* of the afternoon's lesson.

794 883 The catechetical schools form the base of an impressive structure still in process of creation. In describing the Christian youth movements that now flourish in almost every diocese of Greece I will start with those connected with the Zoë Brotherhood, which are the most important. The reader will recall that as early as 1877 Father Eusebius (then chaplain to the School of the Logos) was experimenting with small groups of young people and adults, and such *omades* have played an important part in the extension of his teaching and influence.

First, then, the movement known as *X.M.O.* (*Christianikai Mathetikai Omades*). This is made up of selected members of the catechetical schools between the ages of fifteen and eighteen. Its members try to bring others to the catechetical schools, to spread sound sacramental teaching, to distribute Christian publications and generally to set a high standard of conduct by their example. Each group consists of from fifteen to twenty members, meets once or twice a week and is led by an undergraduate (at any rate in Athens and Salonica).

These student-leaders are drawn from another youth organisation

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known as the 'Christian Union of Students', or *X.Φ.E.* (*Christianiki Phoitetiki Enosis*), founded in 1933, membership of which is confined to undergraduates of the two universities. The movement is sub-divided into 'circles' which meet every week for Bible study. Members of this organisation often preach in village churches in the vicinity of Athens and Salonica, and teams of students undertake missions in the country dioceses. About 1946 there was created a further youth movement, the 'Christian Union of Young Workers' (*Christianiki Enosis Ergazomenon Neon*, or *X.E.E.N.*) This had spread to most of the chief towns of Greece within three years of its foundation and is growing fast. It is organised in factories and workshops much as *X.Φ.E.* in the universities, in 'circles'—one would be tempted to say 'cells' had the word not acquired associations which would be misleading in the present context. The age limits for this movement are seventeen to twenty-five. Many of its members are at present serving in the army.

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These three youth movements, *X.M.O.*, *X.Φ.E.*, and *X.E.E.N.*, are all under the direction of the Zoë Brotherhood. Amongst other organisations for young men and girls, too numerous to describe in detail, several demand special mention. I have already referred to the 'Christian Union of Young People' (*X.O.N.*) that flourishes in the Piraeus. From the movement of Father Angelos Nissiotes there has sprung up in recent years a 'Student Christian Association' which meets every week under the guidance of Professor Bratsiotes, for the study of the Bible. Membership of this extremely lively group is confined to university men and women: it includes some of the ablest of the younger theologians, and has taken the lead in co-operating with the Oecumenical Institute in Switzerland and with the World Student Christian Federation.

Other vigorous youth organisations are to be found attached to several parish churches in Athens—notably at the church of the Prophet Elias, Pankrati, where the then Archimandrite Timothy Matthaiakes (now assistant bishop of Salonica) built up an extremely interesting movement—while many a provincial town has become a centre for similar activities.

It would, however, be a mistake to suppose that membership of the voluntary movements is confined to young men and girls. Their scope is far wider. As a lay theologian of the Zoë Brotherhood once said to me, it is scarcely an exaggeration to claim that the various Christian unions now make provision for every man or woman from the cradle to the

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794 grave. Many of the youth movements have in fact sprung from older associations which were intended in the first place for adults. This was so in the case of the Apostoliki Diakonia of Salonica, for instance, and it was not until nearly twenty years after its foundation that Zoë turned its attention to the development of catechetical schools.

So far as Zoë organisations are concerned, the young man or woman who outgrows *X.Φ.E.* or *X.E.E.N.* may pass to one of the three movements known collectively as *Σ.X.Σ.* (*Synergazomena Christianika Somateia*) One of these is for parents, another for teachers. The third, the 'Christian Union of Scientists' (*X.E.E.*) founded in 1935, membership of which is open to all sorts of professional men, is of considerable importance. This is the movement responsible for the publication of the fortnightly journal *Aktines*, and, moreover, for the remarkable volume entitled *Towards a Christian Civilisation* which was published in Greek and English in 1947. It is in Aktines circles that the pioneer labours of Makrakes and his associates who founded the Anaplasis movement have come to fruition.

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Until quite recently *X.E.E.* was confined to Athens. Now, however, there is a lively branch in Salonica and little groups of professional men are being formed in many provincial towns of Greece. One such town, which I visited early in 1950, had a 'circle' whose members included the mayor, the doctor, the dentist, the commanding officer of the gendarmerie and two lawyers. All these would meet once a week, together with the preacher of the metropolis (a priest of the Zoë Brotherhood), to study the Bible and to discuss the bearing of their faith upon the life of their community. Such a movement abounds in promise. Not the least interesting feature of the Aktines wing of the Zoë organisation is the prominent part that many distinguished professors of the science faculties of the universities have played in the leadership of this Christian movement.

Apart from the Christianika Somateia there are several other movements which have grown up under the supervision of the Zoë Brotherhood: the home mission association known as *Apostolos Paulos*, which was founded three years before the death of Father Eusebius and has an admirable centre in the very heart of Athens; the *Eusebeia* sisterhood, which organises catechetical schools, trains certain of its members as nurses, and publishes a periodical for children. There are, besides, several educational establishments in Athens and the Piraeus, hostels for university students in Athens and Salonica, and a Young Workers'

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centre at Agrinion which includes an orphanage, a hospital (where the nurses are members of the Eusebeia sisterhood), and a group of workshops. All this has sprung from the little brotherhood which Father Eusebius gathered about him in 1907.

I have made no mention of many other voluntary movements which now flourish in Athens and its suburbs: movements like the 'Christian Corner', the 'Christian Social Union' and the association known as the 'Three Hierarchs'. All these were founded by lay people and have remained wholly lay in character. Their members include many distinguished men and women; their activities are both evangelistic and philanthropic.

No account of the evangelistic activity of recent years can ignore the part played by Christian literature, both periodicals and books. Almost every movement has at least one periodical of its own, and the circulation of these weekly and fortnightly papers is astonishingly large for a country where most of the inhabitants devote little time to reading, and where (even in the universities) oral instruction still predominates. The periodical *Zoë*, for example, which has been issued weekly since 1911, now has more than 100,000 subscribers. Several of the provincial movements publish excellent periodicals which circulate all over Greece; such for instance is the journal *Apolytrosis*, published every month by the Apostoliki Diakonia of Thessaloniki, which has a circulation of about 12,000 copies. The 'School of Christ' in the same city also publishes monthly papers, devoted to scriptural exegesis, which are used by many preachers. Both Zoë and the Christian Unions of Father Nissiotes publish periodicals for children.

In the field of book production, as elsewhere, the Zoë Brotherhood has led the way, and the exhibition held in Athens in January, 1950, was an impressive monument to the diligence with which the written word has been cultivated in recent years. Father Eusebius himself wrote many books during the last twenty years of his life, and his *magnum opus*, *The Destiny of Man*, has exercised untold influence. Amidst a wealth of books covering almost every field of Christian literature I would pay special tribute to the work of the brotherhood in publishing the text of the New Testament and the Septuagint in moderately-priced editions well printed on good paper. The Zoë pocket edition of the New Testament has had an enormous circulation.

Of liturgical reform I have already had occasion to speak. Its primary

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object is to enable the laity to participate more fully and intelligently in the eucharistic action, through more frequent communion (Father Eusebius was himself in the habit of celebrating daily), and through a greater 'openness' in the manner of celebrating the holy mysteries. In Athens and Salonica many people now follow the services in the little manual of the Archimandrite Seraphim Papakostas—the popularity of which may be judged by the fact that it had reached its fifth edition by 1950. In general, where the new movements have exercised an effective influence, a high standard of liturgical propriety prevails, though it must be confessed that certain musical innovations of recent years have been unfortunate, to say the least.

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All the movements of which I have been speaking have remained quite unofficial in character, though they have always carried out their work with the blessing of the ecclesiastical authorities and under the general supervision of the local bishop. There has of late, however, been a development of a rather different nature, so important as to demand brief consideration. This is what amounts to the refounding of a body known as the 'Apostolic Diaconate of the Church of Greece', which came into being as long ago as 1930. I do not propose to dwell upon its fortunes prior to its virtual reconstitution: suffice it to say that although great potentialities were latent in this organisation from the outset, its actual activity during the first fifteen years of its life was on a very small scale. It is directed by a council of members of the Holy Synod and professors of the theological faculty of the University of Athens under the presidency of the Archbishop, with Professor Basil Vellas as general director.

The aim of this official organisation is to systematise and co-ordinate the many-sided missionary activity now being undertaken throughout the length and breadth of Greece. In addition to its headquarters at Moni Petraki in Athens it has a local office in every diocese, and is assured of a basis of material resources by a system of annual diocesan contributions.

The possibilities inherent in such a venture are without question very great, and already much has been accomplished. A theological hostel and a school for preachers and confessors have been established at Moni Petraki: the latter promises to be of the greatest service in the

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training of men for work in the provinces. The new movement has taken up and extended almost every type of evangelistic work developed by the voluntary associations. Its activity in the field of publishing has been particularly notable, and has been greatly extended by the setting up of a modern printing press at Moni Petraki in December, 1951. The official journal of the Church of Greece as well as new periodicals for the parish clergy and for the family are printed on this press.

Amongst the projects which the Apostoliki Diakonia hopes to carry out within the next few years is the creation of a 'spiritual centre' just outside Athens, which will include a training college for deaconesses, a hostel for girls studying in the theological faculty of the university, and a model high school, all grouped about a church. Other model schools are to be set up in Tenos and Patras. Like the voluntary movements, the official Apostolic Diaconate supports preachers working in the country dioceses and organises catechetical schools. It seems probable that many of the smaller voluntary movements that flourish in the provinces will before long be absorbed by the official Home Mission with its centralised organisation and unrivalled material resources.

In the case of the more important voluntary associations, however, the position is rather different. The Zoë Brotherhood, above all, now has a highly developed organisation peculiar to itself, and while the movement's ultimate aims are in no sense incompatible with those of the official Home Mission, it has acquired a very marked spirit and tradition of its own. Though the days when members of the brotherhood could be tried for false teaching and *kakodoxia* are long since past, and its preachers and confessors stand high in the estimation of the ordinary people, Zoë still has many bitter opponents. The brotherhood is still young and it would be surprising had it escaped altogether from the growing pains of youth. Not all of its members have been endowed with the surpassing gentleness and mature discretion of its founder; in denouncing the evils of the times they have sometimes shown a spirit that recalls Apostolos Makrákes rather than Father Eusebius.

The voluntary movements have, it must be confessed, borrowed somewhat unwarily from the west. Their influence in the field of eikonography, for example, has been deplorable: the wonderful traditions of the Greek Church have been utterly abandoned in favour of feeble imitations of the effete and secularised religious art of Latin Christendom. Here, at least, the Apostoliki Diakonia has set a most

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courageous example and one can only hope that the work of Photis Kontoglou, somewhat mannered though it is, may mark the beginnings of return to a tradition that had not wholly perished in the remoter provinces of Greece when the dominion of the Turk was overthrown.

When all is said, however, the fact remains that the Zoë Brotherhood has, under God, been the most potent factor in the spiritual awakening of the Greek people during the last two generations, and the traveller who would form a just estimate of the present situation will, if he is wise, take the trouble to gain a first-hand acquaintance with the labours of this remarkable movement and to enter into its spirit before he pays heed to the strictures of its critics.

One can readily understand the desire of the ecclesiastical authorities to systematise and co-ordinate the evangelistic activity of the voluntary associations: even in reforming circles to-day one is frequently reminded of the saying 'every Greek a *kapetanios!*' It is, however, no less important to remember that the marvellous work of these unofficial bodies has sprung from the consecrated life and example of a handful of men who had given themselves wholly to God that His power might be manifested in them, and it may well be that the new Home Mission will have to learn by bitter experience the lesson that 'the victory of the width' is given only to those who have fought 'the battle of the depth' and have prevailed: the regeneration of the Greek people in Christ will not be brought about through legislation and centralised planning alone.

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XIII

TRAINING FOR THE MINISTRY

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> For a priest ought not only to be pure, as being honoured with so great a ministry. He should also be very intelligent, and experienced in many affairs, and even equally skilful in all secular business with those who are engaged in it, while he must yet be more entirely detached from the love of it than anchorites who resort to the mountains.
>
> ST. JOHN CHRYSOSTOM

> Let mariners learn astronomy; merchants' factors study arithmetic; surveyors get them geometry; spectacle-makers optic; landleapers geography; town-clerks rhetoric; what should he do with a spade, that hath no ground to dig; or they with learning that have no use of it?
>
> ROBERT BURTON
> *The Anatomy of Melancholy*

IN THE many-sided activity of the voluntary movements the parish clergy, with two or three distinguished exceptions, have as yet played little part. The whole weight of the burden has been borne by the laity and the celibate clergy. To-day, however, it is widely realised that the incalculable spiritual gains of the last two generations or so can be consolidated and made available for the whole of the Greek Church only through the patient labours of an enlightened and devoted parochial ministry: the function of the itinerant confessor, the lay theologian and the catechist is essentially complementary to that of the parish priest; it is upon the latter that the responsibility for the building up of the local church must ultimately rest. Hence the concern for the raising of the prevailing standards of clerical education which one finds among those who are most deeply concerned with the strengthening and purifying of Greek church life at the present time.

For it is not only in the westernised circles of Kolonaki and Kephissia that the word *papas* is liable to evoke a faintly contemptuous smile, nor is it the hostile critic of the Greek Church who most vehemently

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only one parish priest from each group of three inhabited villages to be away from his flock at any given time. In such circumstances it was not always possible for a priest to complete the full course at the seminary, and many had to be content with twelve months at Kozani.

Despite all these difficulties, however, the seminary had already, by the spring of 1950, established itself as a real centre of pastoral and liturgical teaching in the dioceses of western Macedonia, and its influence could be detected in several score of parishes dispersed throughout this barren region. In remote hamlets of northern Pindos, catechetical schools were flourishing for the first time under the direction of a priest trained at Kozani. The holy sacrifice was being offered week by week with renewed fervour in many a village church; and there were not a few country parsons (not all of them young men) who had gone back to their parishes after spending two years at the seminary with a quickened realisation of the high dignity of their calling.

Not all the clergy, it is hardly necessary to add, are as yet fully convinced of the utility of the new training school. I well recall meeting one old gentleman who was highly indignant at his metropolitan's suggestion that he might profitably spend a year or two at Kozani, and who maintained with some heat that after thirty-three years in the sacred ministry he could learn only "from the Lord". There has been much hilarity in many a rural tavern that some grave *papas* should have been sent back to school for a couple of years. It will doubtless be a long time before these seminaries for parish clergy (which are still something of an innovation) win universal acceptance and approval, and it would be idle to pretend that they offer a wholly satisfactory solution to the problem of how best to train married priests not ordained till many years after they have completed their ordinary schooling.

The seminaries do, nevertheless, meet an urgent need, and it is to be hoped that they will exert an ever increasing influence upon the country dioceses of Greece, and will send forth into the villages a steady stream of true pastors—men who are not "witty, or learned, or eloquent, but *holy*"—for in Greece, as in other countries, that is perhaps the greatest need of all.

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As I stressed in an earlier chapter, the Greek clergy fall into two sharply defined categories: on the one hand the married *papades*, on the

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793 schools is characterised for the most part by a somewhat arid academic-
874 ism. During the nineteenth century a theologian who went abroad for
177 post-graduate studies went almost as a matter of course to Germany; and, although this is no longer so, the shadow of Harnack still lies across the threshold of the theological school at Athens. "Berlin, Leipzig, Jena, Halle, etc.", wrote Dr. Adrian Fortescue in 1907, "are full of Greek students, who with the versatility of their race, very soon learn to talk German perfectly, and to think and argue about theological questions like German higher critics!"

779 Greek academic theology, though distinguished by great technical
177 competence and erudition, and considerable familiarity with the critical work which one associates with the German schools of the latter
874 part of last century, is largely deficient in those qualities which have made the work of certain Russian theologians of the diaspora of such absorbing interest for the western Christian. The Greek theologian, while he has benefited incalculably by his scientific training in the schools of Germany, has scarcely as yet been forced back upon his own proper tradition by the pressure of an alien environment. With few exceptions, moreover, he is curiously out of touch with recent tendencies in western theological thinking: often he seems to be a generation behind the times, unaware that critical theories no longer hold the field in the schools of Paris and Oxford—not to mention Geneva.

How long this state of affairs will last it is difficult to say. The present isolation is not hard to understand if one takes into account the effect of the war years and the lack of contact—even on the intellectual level—between the Greek professors and those Roman Catholic scholars whose work has been so important for the west during the past decade, and whose exchanges with certain Russian theologians have proved so mutually rewarding. It may well be that the links now being forged between Athens and Paris—and in particular with the Russian Academy of St. Sergius—are of crucial importance for the future. At present, it must be confessed, the transition from the theological climate of Orthodox Paris to that of the Athenian schools is apt to be somewhat disappointing to the Frankish *theologos* to whom a first glimpse of the wholeness of Orthodoxy has come as the revelation of a long-forgotten realm. The theology of the schools seems to be earthbound and wholly academic: a theology of the manuals which bears little relation to holy living.

779 The theoretical character of much contemporary Greek theology has
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had regrettable consequences for the development of the new movements, with which the theological schools have, in general, little vital connexion—although more than one professor of the theological faculty at Athens has played an important rôle in their work and organisation. In many quarters—and especially, perhaps, within Zoë circles—a sense of the apparent irrelevance of this theoretical science to practical piety has given rise to an impatience with all theological questions. We must, it is said, be *practical*—and this theology of the schools is not practical; it is a theoretical science wholly unrelated to the urgent problems which are the daily concern of the preacher and the confessor. Such an attitude cannot but strike one as curiously out of place in an Orthodox *milieu* and is not without its dangers.

A few of the clergy go abroad to continue their studies after graduating from the Greek theological schools. Many a young layman is sent to western Europe or America for post-graduate study in the hope that upon his return to Greece he will offer himself for ordination; but a first acquaintance with ecclesiastical conditions very different from those to which he has been accustomed (particularly in the matter of the status of the married clergy and their field of activity) can easily have an unsettling effect upon the potential *despotes*, and it is not unknown for a young graduate, not conscious of a very definite call to the celibate life, to waver in his first resolve of becoming a priest, after two or three years in England or America.

Apart from the minority who go abroad after leaving the university, the celibate clergy normally pass immediately to an episcopal household without further study. Until quite recently there was nothing in Greece comparable to the English theological college. Since the war, however, there has been opened in Athens an establishment which approximates in some measure to the English institution. This is the 'School for Preachers' which is housed in the hostel of the Apostoliki Diakonia: a fine modern building occupying two sides of the quadrangle at Moni Petraki and overlooking the garden of the British School of Archaeology. Though completed some years ago, it was long requisitioned as a military hospital, and it was not until the early part of 1950 that the whole building was made available to the Church.

The School for Preachers provides a two-year course of study (primarily of a pastoral character) for men who have already graduated from the theological school of the university. In 1950 a considerable

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number of the students were experienced preachers and confessors from the provinces, but in the years to come they will normally consist in the main of young graduates of the theological school. The primary aim of this school is to equip priests (and lay theologians) for work in the dioceses, and it promises to be of the greatest service to the Church of Greece.

The same building serves as a hostel for theological students who live at some distance from Athens and who would otherwise be dispersed in lodgings (though some find a home in one of the hostels of the Zoë Brotherhood). All the inhabitants—theological students as well as those belonging to the School for Preachers—share a common life, with morning and evening prayers, and meals taken together in the refectory on the coenobitic pattern. Now that the theological faculty of the university is attracting students from Ethiopia and America, as well as from the autocephalous Church of Cyprus, and the Apostoliki Diakonia is offering generous hospitality to occasional Frankish visitors and a student or two from the Russian Academy in Paris, this community is fast acquiring an oecumenical character such as belonged to Halki in the day of its fame.

The theological faculty at Salonica, as I mentioned earlier, is of recent foundation. Despite the difficulties of the times, however, it is now in full vigour and holds out very great promise to the sorely-tried and understaffed dioceses of northern Greece. It is greatly to be hoped that it will prove possible before long to set up at Salonica an institution similar to that now flourishing in Athens, and combining the functions of a post-graduate theological college and a hostel for theological students from the outlying provinces. Many of these students at present have some difficulty in maintaining themselves for the period of their studies, and comparatively few can be accommodated in the new hostel of the Zoë Brotherhood or in the little hostel maintained for several years in the face of tremendous material difficulties by the Apostoliki Diakonia of Salonica.

At present there is an acute shortage of educated clergy in these the more remote provinces of Greece. Few dioceses have more than one priest-theologian and in some *eparchiai* the metropolitan is single-handed. In such circumstances preaching and the mystery of penance are inevitably much neglected. Not a few amongst the bishops of these northern dioceses are advocates of some kind of 'direction' of the educated clergy which would counteract the prevailing current which

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sweeps away so inordinate a number of archimandrites to Athens and its suburbs, leaving the mountain dioceses wretchedly short of trained theologians. 793 369

It is interesting to note that the present Archbishop of Athens has recently been moved by the continuing shortage of clergy of all classes in the outlying districts of Greece to conscript from amongst the clergy of the Athens-Piraeus area a 'Sacred Company', consisting of fifty archimandrites, for a 'Spiritual Campaign' (*Pneumatike Ekstrateia*) of a month's duration and covering the dioceses of Didymoteichon, Maroneia (Comotini), Drama, Serres, Siderokastro, Kilkis, Verroia, Edessa, Florina, Kastoria, Grevena and Naupaktos: 393 parishes in these dioceses were without a priest in September, 1951. It may well be that similar campaigns, and perhaps some kind of clerical conscription of a more permanent character, will be forced upon the Church if many of her children are not to be left without adequate spiritual guidance.

It is perhaps needless to add that the reader would be greatly deceived if he should suppose for one moment that Athens and its suburbs afford a refuge for idle drones of archimandrites who have from time to time to be dragged forth from their retreats by a stern archbishop, and packed off to the barren mountain dioceses of Macedonia for a month's hard work. Nothing could be farther from the truth: were there three times the present number of educated clergy in the Athens-Piraeus area there would yet be urgent tasks left undone for want of priests capable of tackling them. The Athenian archimandrite is the busiest of men, constantly in demand, not merely to serve on committees, but for preaching and confessing and real spiritual work.

In the country dioceses, nevertheless, the present situation is still more serious; the shortage of educated clergy is even more acute. True, the position is slightly better now than it was in 1949, when many a diocesan *hierokeryx* was somehow contriving to combine his already arduous duties with those of an army chaplain, and others had had to abandon their dioceses for a time in order to minister to isolated mountain outposts, but it remains sufficiently disturbing. Many a provincial 'saint' is acutely conscious of vital work still neglected, which could be undertaken could he but command the services of a single priest-theologian. [722]

The Metropolitan of Kilkis, for example, charged with the care of 140 scattered communities, had only one priest qualified to assist him in the work of preaching and confessing the people; a priest already [794]

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793 burdened with the spiritual care of more than 2,000 children belonging
369 to the newly organised Christian Unions of the diocese and a score of
[794] isolated garrisons, yet contriving somehow to find time to train a group of young men and women to take charge of the village catechetical schools when the time came for the refugees to return to their homes.

Is it any wonder that in such circumstances the shepherd of one of these mountain flocks will sometimes persuade himself that the populous cities of the south have more than their rightful share of the educated clergy, and picture them as a pleasant haven from the chill blasts that sweep his own desolate pastures; a place where university men "tarry out their time, wither away as a flower ungathered in a garden, and are never used; or, as so many candles, illuminate themselves alone, obscuring one another's light . . . the least of which, translated to a dark room, or to some country benefice, where it might shine apart, would give a fair light and be seen over all."

793 Much will depend upon the success of the strenuous efforts now being
871 made to raise the prevailing standards of education among the country
369 clergy and to increase the number of priest-theologians available for work in urban parishes and as assistants to the provincial metropolitans. So far as the village clergy are concerned, the lower seminaries do, on the whole, meet the needs of the present situation tolerably well. The system whereby the pastor of a small rural community is normally chosen by the village elders ensures that the mountain *papas* is a man of good character and reputation, often the natural leader of the community. The Greek country parson has little need of book-learning, and a lengthy academic training would be wasted upon him.

793 With the parish clergy of the towns the position is less satisfactory.
369 The urban parish priest does not always command that universal respect
[554] and affection normally enjoyed by his rural colleague. This is not to say that the clergy of the towns are credited with any of the more spectacular vices. The Greek bishop is not compelled to exercise an unsleeping vigilance to ensure that his priests and deacons do not "being drunk bellow in the streets; or what is worse, in their drink whoop and hollow in the church; or read the church service in a double tone . . . that their upper dress though plain be clean, and not one black and another red; that they walk not in a dronish lazy manner, nor lie down to sleep in the streets; nor tipple in brandy houses and alehouses, nor boast the strength of their heads in drinking at entertainments." Such deplorable failings (though apparently regrettably prevalent in the Russia of Peter the

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Great) cannot be said to characterise the Greek clergy of the present day. 793

It is, however, frequently asserted that the town clergy are for the most part ill-educated, worldly, idle, more concerned with fees than with spiritual things; and, while there are, happily, many and notable exceptions to such generalisations, it must be confessed that there is some truth in these charges. The education of many of the urban pastors is woefully inadequate, and a lamentably small proportion of those educated in the ecclesiastical schools—and to whom, one might suppose, the Church would turn in recruiting her ministry for the urban parishes—seem ready to offer themselves for ordination. 369 [871]

This leakage is in part explained by the late canonical age for ordination, but the reluctance of many well-educated men to become parish priests is also due in no small measure to the precarious economic situation of the clergy. "Our diocese", a Greek bishop wrote to me in 1949, "lacks educated clergy . . . no eagerness is to be observed on the part of the laity to attain to the priestly office, on account of the poor, indeed ridiculous stipend which is at present paid to the clergy." Other causes of this lack of eagerness may be discerned in the style of dress, the untrimmed hair and beard, and general manner of life which custom continues to demand of the clergy (and which are often thoroughly distasteful to the young graduate of the ecclesiastical school), as well as in the abundant opportunities open to the lay theologian. It is, perhaps, hardly surprising that the provision of educated priests to serve in the urban parishes of Greece is a matter which in the eyes of the ecclesiastical authorities is of absolutely primary importance at the present time, and which is receiving the most serious consideration. [465] [178] [794]

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795 Greek is as yet only beginning to awake to the full significance of the discovery, and it may well be some years before Athens and Salonica are in a position to make that contribution to the life and thought of Christendom as a whole of which they are potentially capable. Yet from out of the depths of suffering and desolation there has come the rebirth of a Christian nation. The Church of Greece has emerged from her fiery trial purified, and conscious, as perhaps never before, of her mission. What may be the ultimate consequences of such a regeneration none can say: the possibilities are infinite.

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[214 794] In June, 1948, on the festival of the holy apostles Peter and Paul, the Christian Union of Professional Men of Greece published a stencilled typescript of a draft entitled *Towards a Christian Civilisation*—since issued in book form by the Damascus Press. These pages, as the authors remarked in the original preface to the work, came from a country wherein the agitation, the uncertainty and sometimes the agony of the world had been concentrated; from a land often referred to by her friends as "this unhappy country". And yet, they went on, "we know that our happiness (or unhappiness) depends not on the outcome of external political events, but on whether the Christian and spiritual foundations of our life are firmly established or not". Their voice, they concluded, was not the despairing voice of a nation crying out to the world: *morituri te salutamus*; rather it was that of a people who, even from the depth of their present agony, sought to echo our Lord's words: "If a man keep my saying, he shall never see death." That is the spirit that is abroad in Greece to-day.

795 796 If I were asked for a single picture to epitomise the present state of the Greek Church, I would turn once more to the Macedonian township of Edessa, set amidst streams and cherry orchards on the summit of the cliff that bars the way from Salonica to the frontier metropolis of Florina. In the early hours of the morning of the feast of the Epiphany in the year 1949, while the Metropolitan of Edessa and Pella, the Lord Panteleimon, with his deacon, Father Gabriel, two or three refugee monks, his mother, the boys from the orphanage and a handful of lay people, were singing the long vigil-service in the chapel of the metropolis, this already battered town was attacked by a Communist force. By dawn the place was encircled.

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[Village Life]

perhaps, not be counted as full-time farmers. Indeed, when one realizes that according to this same census the average family farm contained only a little more than 8 acres, and the amount of productive land per head of the rural population totaled just 1.75 acres, it is obvious that there are very few full-time farmers in Greece, if the term is taken to mean persons who busy themselves on the land throughout the year.

Except for a few weeks, when especially intensive work of cultivation or harvesting must be done, Greek peasant farmers enjoy a great deal of leisure, and spend it, characteristically, sitting in the village *cafeneion*, or coffee house, talking, playing backgammon, or just watching the passing scene. A casual observer might mistake such idleness for laziness; yet when tangible gain is to be won by working hard, Greek peasants do not spare themselves. But in practically every village there are far more hands than are needed to do the work of the fields; and when the needful work has been done, sitting in a coffee house is more entertaining than sitting at home. There a man may hear the latest gossip of the village, read the Athens newspapers, talk politics, and watch the shadows shift across the village square as the day progresses.

The women, on the other hand, lead a much harder life. Household tasks and the care of children take up most of the hours of the day, and in the seasons when field work is heavy, women work side by side with the men. For a woman to sit in a coffee house would be the grossest breach of etiquette, something quite unthinkable. The village water fountain may serve as a place for daily gossip; but it is the church which really provides the village women with a meeting place where they may on a Sunday morning, after (or even during) the service, talk and enjoy a few minutes of leisure each week. By a curious and unspoken law, the men of the villages usually do not attend church, save on feast days and other special occasions. Thus

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communities) were governed by appointees of the Ministry of Interior. This sometimes led to disharmony and distrust between the inhabitants and their legal representatives. In 1951, however, elections were organized in villages (and larger communities), so that for the first time since the war the people had a chance to choose their own local officials. Villagers elect members of the village council, which varies in size with the size of the community. The council members then choose one of their number as president and another as secretary.

The secretary's duty is to keep village records; but the main responsibilities rest upon the president. He represents the village in all dealings with the outer world, and has an informal authority to hear complaints and settle quarrels within the village. Legal cases, however, lie beyond his competence; they are dealt with by regular judges, appointed by the Ministry of Justice.

A second center of village leadership is the church. Every village has a church, and the priest is often a native of the village, distinguished from his fellows by a special garb and the fact that he has attended a seminary for a year or longer. Priests are appointed by bishops, but a congregation has the right to refuse a nomination, or to object to a priest it dislikes. In such cases the bishop normally attempts to find someone else to suit the wishes of the community.

A third focus of leadership is the school system. Nearly every village has a primary school, staffed by a teacher who has had at least a secondary school education. Unlike the priest or the president, he is most often a stranger to the community, appointed to his post by the Ministry of Education. Here, in many villages, lies an important point of contact with the outside world; but just because the schoolmaster is usually an outsider and often a city man, he fails to command in most villages quite the same trust and authority that the priest and president enjoy.

/31 cont./ where thoughts are crystallized into action. Here the political leaders meet their followers. 275 517 [208] [203]

Every stranger, merchant, peddler, politician, government employee, or any other agent, goes first to the coffee house where he can get reliable information and pass on his mission.

The Orthodox religion has been enforced upon the people directly from the church. The religion is taught at the school, and church ceremonies are conducted in the church. The whole family goes to the church every Sunday morning and thus the child follows the elders in their religious beliefs. The church through its numerous holidays teaches something new to the people, brings up the people to it through various ceremonies. The child /32/ learns from father and mother that this or that holiday has this or that moral meaning to their lives. The school as a part of its religious education obliges every student with the teacher to attend church on Sundays and holidays. The teacher or the priest on such holiday occasions explains to the people the religious significance of the day and its practical application to their lives. Their Christian religion is unlike the Christian religion of many other sects. The Orthodox church believes in one God and in Christ as his son, but according to the nature of their demands they pray to special designated saints whom they think are able to help them. For example, for rain they pray to St. Ilias, who rides in a carriage and makes the thunder. For war they pray to St. Demeter. For travel on sea they pray to St. Nicola. For having a child to St. Nufrios. For sickness to St. Spyridion, etc. down the line. It is not so simple as the Protestant religion, nor so simple as Protestantism in that it depends much more on ceremonials. They take their religion seriously and believe in it completely. 794 869 872 [796] [796] 782 776 795 [771]

When a cow or a member of a family gets sick, or the crop is not as promising, either the priest or another person next to the priest will be called to offer prayer. /33/ The priest is the representative of the Saints through whom they communicate with God. Religion makes a large part of their activity and thus the youngsters as they grow, fit themselves in it and take their respective places. 793 782 [776] 869

/80 cont./ 346 778
their humble houses and subsistence level of living the people like to build beautiful churches with high steeples and decorate them /81/ with as many ikons and church bells they can. [316] The people of Megali Vrisi not being satisfied with the structure of the present church have already quarried stone from the nearby hills for their future church structure. [794] When the farmers were notified to offer personal work for the church they did it without complaint.

The people look up to the church as an institution which gives them hope and courage in times of disappointment and discouragement. 771 Once a year a confession is made in the church in front of the ikons and the priest. [783] People tell of their bad acts and forgive those that caused them trouble. [796] All wedding ceremonies, baptisms and name day celebrations take place in the church.

Attendance. Women and children attend the church regularly. 794 The men are rather irregular in their attendance. 796 This is not due to their negligence nor to their failure to respect the church, but is due to the long church services that last for three hours. The people get tired of going to the church. Most attend the last part of the services. In spite of the variety of music and ceremonial activities, the church is losing /82/ attendance. Men like to know what they hear in the church, and since it is all abstract to them they prefer to stay out and send their wives and children.

With the increase of modern scientific beliefs by the farmers, the church will be forced to change its course and adopt itself to the new social changes.

The membership is obligatory. Every one born in the village becomes a member. 794 It is not necessary to keep in books the names of the members since the whole population of the village naturally belongs to the church.

Contributions. Every family has to contribute for the support of the priest and for the upkeep of the church. This contribution is paid in kind. Besides this the church has voluntary donations [769] by people whose prayers are answered, and by others for the

/82 cont./
peaceful rest of their dead. They donate to the church either money or wheat. On St. Nicolas day, the people from remote villages bring either a chicken, a pig, a cow, a calf, a sheep, or a goat to the church as a present. Numerous animals are lined in the yard of the church which are sold in auction the same day. /83/ Every Sunday morning at the church service a tray is passed to the people for contributions. The selling of candles brings an appreciable amount of money. The church has its fields which are either worked or hired to others to swell the income of the church.

794 • [769] [437] [427]

Part VIII Living Together.

Mutual aid. Both groups, the Thracians and the Caucasians, before settling in this village had a civilization of their own. The isolation of the Caucasians in the interior part of mountainous Caucasus has developed a unique type of civilization mostly built around their community life. Here they had the compound type of family organized under the direct rule of the oldest in the family. In spite of the large number in the family the work was divided every day among all. Every one did his best with no complaint. The men gave blind obedience to the head of the family and the women to the mother. The obedience was so strict that misunderstanding would seldom occur. Every one was specialized in his or her own work. All buying and selling was done by the head of the family. No one could smoke, speak, nor could sit by the head of the family unless told to do so. A strictly military type of rules were observed. The father decided the marriage age of his son and this usually would coincide with the need of more labor in the family. Sometimes /84/ the need for labor was so great that the age of 15 was thought practical to give the solution for extra labor. The grandma was responsible for the education of the children either in household work or school work. The children call their mother by her first name and instead, call the grandma, mother.

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Local Holidays. The Greek Orthodox Church has more saint days than the calendar of the year could take care of. The church calendar used to provide more than half of the days of the year as observable holidays which naturally provided more leisure time for the people. More leisure time meant more churches, more spending and more monasteries. With the advance of the materialistic civilization these holidays have been greatly reduced, but still there are 94 church holidays for the farmer to observe besides Sundays and the national holidays. These holidays provide ample leisure time /97/ for the farmers to drink and dance. The village musicians get out on the village square and call out those that celebrate their name days. One by one the big circle is formed in the village square. If the Greek Orthodox Church has nothing to serve to the people by building up their religious beliefs, it has enough holidays to relieve the people from life's struggle. Megali Vrisi celebrates St. Nicholas day as its village holiday. This is the day when every corner of every house is scrubbed and cleaned. The village yards are well cleaned. The church committee prepares a special program featuring certain events. Prizes are given to the best wrestlers and to the best dancers. These events draw a large crowd from the neighboring villages. On this special day the livestock of the church is sold in auction. People donate to the church either poultry, calves, sheep, lambs, or goats for the dreams they dreamed about the saint of the church or the help they received from the church when they prayed. These can be considered as sacrifices which people make to the church. The church committee sells the livestock on this occasion. This custom is very similar to that of the primitive peoples of worshiping their gods by sacrifices.

/98/ The holiday has the following effects on the peoples:

1. Gives them a chance to clean up their houses.
2. Makes them hospitable for they have to take care of the visitors.
3. The day they forgive each other and forget the old grievances.

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really Greek, since they do not conform to the tradition of Greekness.

Religion permeates Greek life, punctuating it with ritual. No Greek, urban or rural, would think of initiating anything important without a religious inauguration. Schools open with the inaugurative *agiasmos*, "making holy"; the foundation stone of every house is laid with *agiasmos*; merchants begin new undertakings with the proper religious inauguration. On Epiphany, the sea is made holy for those who journey on it. In the country, blessed water is carried from the Epiphany Mass to sprinkle on the fields. The Virgin and the Saints are invoked, but not mainly as correctives; their main function is to endow an undertaking with good and success, it is not primarily to prevent or correct. When a loved man, husband, son, brother, father, beloved, goes away with the merchant marine, or in the sponge-fishery, a woman makes a vow to the appropriate saint, to be fulfilled on the safe return. The islands are studded with small chapels which were promised on such occasions. However, priests are called in, and Saints and the Virgin invoked, also, when difficulties arise. Vows are made for the recovery of a loved one; the priest is called when the family has had a run of misfortune, to "make holy" and exorcise the evil. Priests conduct a rain litany to break a drought.

Traditionally, Sunday services are attended regularly by women and children, perhaps less faithfully by the men. Ceremonials, however, draw the entire family. The ritual is not bolstered by strict limits of time or rules of silence. Mass starts in due course, a little early or a little late, not on the dot of an appointed time. Children run in and out between the aisles, and mothers whisper endearments to babies. A woman will break into a dirge during the Good Friday Mass of the Epitaph, mourning the death of Christ, or adressing herself in sympathy to the bereaved Virgin. The Mass before the midnight preceding Easter is tense with expectation; there is great release and spontaneous joy when Christ is announced to be risen, and the "Christ is risen!" with which all are greeted is a true, joyous message, full of the wonder and the reassurance of the renewed miracle; the candles lighted from the sacred light at this time are carried home with true concern for saving the flame from extinction.

Religion is so firmly entrenched and unquestioned that it can be taken with casualness and a lack of self-conscious effort. It is accepted and ever-present like the air. One talks about Masses and preparations for litanies, but not about religion. Religion is not a personal matter, nor is it a guide to conduct. People consult the priest, but in matters of human relations, or, at any rate, relations which are regarded as secular, not because they are assailed by doubts. Young men do not talk about the meaning of Christ in their lives, nor do young girls dream of entering a convent. On the other hand, the Saints and the Virgin often figure in speech: a man singing of his beloved likens her neck to an altar, her arms to church tapers, or he tells her that he worships her like the Virgin.